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A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY

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REVISED EDITION

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON

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Printed in the United States of America



PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION

In revising *A History of English Literature* I have kept constantly in mind the leading idea which the authors had before them in the original preparation of the book, and which is implied in the original preface. It is that the teaching of literature, whether by handbooks or lectures, must have as its first object to stimulate the pupil to come into immediate contact with that literature itself. I have always felt that William Vaughn Moody, as teacher and critic, realized this aim with extraordinary success. Accordingly I have tried to preserve the spirit which he gave the book in this respect, and have left unchanged, so far as possible, the passages which he wrote with this end in view—to inspire his reader, not to accept any critical view, orthodox or original, of an author, but to taste and see for himself. At the same time I have increased somewhat the purely historical matter of the book, and tried to suggest more definitely the interpretation of large periods and movements. Much more might be done in this direction, particularly in treating foreign influences. I have, however, sought not to exceed the possible limits of first-hand study on the part of the reader.

In this revision I have drawn, without the slightest reserve, on the learning of my colleagues of the English Department of the University of Chicago. To Professor Thomas A. Knott I am particularly indebted for a careful reworking of the first three chapters, and to Professor John M. Manly for the same service in the pages on the origin of the drama. Other portions of the book were read, with helpful criticism, by Professor C. R. Baskervill, Professor T. P. Cross, Professor J. W. Linn, Doctor G. W.

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Sherburn, and Doctor D. H. Stevens. Professor W. F. Bryan, of Northwestern University, gave me valuable suggestions based on his use of the book in classroom. Mr. Padraic Colum furnished me with interesting notes on contemporary poets, and kindly contributed the sketch of the Irish literary movement. Mr. Samuel Kaplan revised the bibliography. To them I owe most cordial thanks, as well as to many others, teachers and former pupils, who have from time to time sent me notes and suggestions of correction and improvement. If I have failed at any time in personal acknowledgment I hope that I can make amends by the care with which I have accepted such criticisms and this explicit recognition of their value.

R. M. L.

University of Chicago, January, 1918.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

Several dangers lie before the writer of an elementary history of literature. He may conceive his task too ambitiously, and in his zeal for thoroughness may lose that clearness and simplicity of plan which is indispensable in the first presentation of a large subject. He may, on the other hand, be tempted to simplify his matter artificially, and in so doing may fail to give the student any safe substructure upon which to build in later study. Again, in striving to be scientific, he may be only dry; or in a wholesome desire to be entertaining, he may be only gossipy or nebulous. The present volume, whether or not it avoids these dangers, has been prepared with full consciousness of them. An attempt has here been made to present the history of English literature from the earliest times to our own day, in a historical scheme simple enough to be apprehended by young students, yet accurate and substantial enough to serve as a permanent basis for study, however far the subject is pursued. But within the limits of this formal scheme, the fact has been held constantly in mind that literature, being the vital and fluid thing it is, must be taught, if at all, more by suggestion, and by stimulation of the student's own instinctive mental life, than by dogmatic assertion. More than any other branch of study, literature demands on the part of the teacher an attitude of respect toward the intelligence of the student; and if at any point the authors of this book may seem to have taken too much alertness of mind for granted, their defence must be that only by challenge and invitation can any permanent result in the way of intellectual growth be accomplished. The historian of English literature deals

with the most fascinating of stories, the story of the imaginative career of a gifted race; he is in duty bound not to cheapen or to dull his theme, but, so far as in him lies, to give those whom he addresses a realizing sense of the magnitude of our common heritage in letters. To do this, he must work in the literary spirit, and with freedom of appeal to all the latent capabilities of his reader's mind.

The proportions of this book have been carefully considered. A full half of the space has been given to the last two centuries, and much more to the nineteenth century than to the eighteenth. These and other apportionments of space have been made, not on absolute grounds, but with the design of throwing into prominence what is most important for a student to learn upon his first approach to the subject. The chief figures in each era have been set in relief, and the minor figures have been grouped about them, in an endeavor thus to suggest their relative significance. A full working bibliography, including texts, biography, and criticism, has been added, in the hope that it may be of assistance not only in the current work of the classroom, but also as a guide for later study.

The thanks of the authors are due to Professor F. N. Robinson, of Harvard University, for his kindness in criticising the contents of the early chapters.

W. V. M.
R. M. L.

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A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

I

ENGLISH literature had its beginnings at a time when the ancestors of the English people lived on the continent of Europe and spoke a tongue which, though the ancestor of modern English, is unintelligible to us without special study. Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, belongs to the low-German group of languages, of which Dutch is the best modern representative; and the men who spoke it lived, when history first discovers them, along the shores of the North Sea from the mouth of the Rhine to the peninsula of Jutland. They were divided into three principal tribes: the Saxons, dwelling near the mouth of the Elbe; the Angles, inhabiting the southwest part of Denmark; and the Jutes, extending north of the Angles into modern Jutland.

The Anglo-Saxon Tribes.

How extensive these tribes were and how far into the interior their territories reached we do not know. That portion of them which concerns us dwelt along the sea; the earliest English poetry which has been preserved, even though it was composed three centuries later in England, gives glimpses backward into that almost unknown time —glimpses of wild moors and dense forests where lurked

Their Home; War and Seafaring.

gigantic monsters half seen amid mist and darkness; glimpses of the stormy northern ocean filled likewise with shapes of shadowy fear. Whether from superstition or from the physical difficulty of the country, these shore tribes seem not to have penetrated far inland. Their two passions, war and wandering, urged them forth upon the sea. As soon as spring had unlocked the harbors their boats sailed out in search of booty and adventure; sometimes to ravage or to wreak blood-feud on a neighboring tribe, sometimes to harry a monastery on the coasts of Roman Gaul or to plunder along the white cliffs of England, their future home. This seafaring life, full of danger and adventure, was a frequent inspiration of the poet. The sea, in the rich vocabulary of poetry, is the "seal-bath," the "swan-road," the "whale-path." The ship is the "swimming-wood," the "sea-steed," the "wave-house of warriors"; its curved prow is "wreathed with foam like the neck of a swan." The darker aspects of the ocean are also sung with fervor. The fatalistic Anglo-Saxon was fearless before the terror and gloom of the element which he most loved to inhabit.

Their Religion.

No actual poetry has come down to us from that earliest period, but the poetry of a subsequent age is filled with phrases and reminiscences of ancient pagan voyages and battles. This later poetry is nearly all Christian in tone or in substance. But from other sources we know what were the primitive gods of the race: Tiu, a mysterious and dreadful deity of war; Woden, father of the later dynasty of gods and the patron of seers and travellers; Thor, the god of thunder; Frea, mother of the gods and giver of fruitfulness. These are commemorated in our names of the days of the week—Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The rites of Eostre, a mysterious goddess of the dawn, survive, though strangely altered, in the Christian festival of Easter. In studying the earlier

poetry, Christian though it is superficially, we must put out of our minds as far as we can all those ideals of life and conduct which come from Christianity and remember that we have to do with men whose recently discarded gods were only magnified images of their own wild natures; men who delighted in bloodshed, in revenge, and in plunder, and were much given to deep drinking in the mead-hall, but who nevertheless were sensitive to blame and praise, were reared in an elaborate code of manners and endowed with chivalry and dignity, were passionately loyal to their king or lord, and were thrilled with a poetry that rang with heroic adventure.

Their Singers.

Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors had in an eminent degree also that passion which gives the first impulse to literature among a primitive people—love of glory. When their first recorded epic hero, Beowulf, has met his death, and his followers are recalling his noble nature, they say as their last word that "he was of all world-kings the most desirous of praise." It was not enough for such men as he that they should spend their lives in glorious adventures; they desired to see their names and their deeds spread among distant peoples and handed down to unborn generations. Hence the poet, who alone could insure this fame, was held in high esteem. Two classes of singers were recognized: first the gleeman, who did not create his own songs, but merely (like the Greek rhapsodist) chanted what he had learned from others; and, second, the scop, the poet proper, who took the crude material of legend and adventure which lay about him and shaped it into lays. Sometimes the scop was permanently attached to the court of an ætheling, or lord, was granted land and treasure, and was raised by virtue of his poetcraft to the same position of honor which the other followers of the ætheling held by virtue of their prowess in battle. Sometimes he wandered from court to court, depending

for a hospitable reception upon the appreciation of his host for the tales that he chanted to the harp.

Two ancient poems tell of the fortunes of the scop. The first of these, entitled *Deor's Lament*, is perhaps the oldest Germanic lyric poem in existence. It stands almost alone in Old English poetry in that it is strophic in form with a recurring refrain. In a tone of brooding, melancholy fatalism the poet consoles himself for his eclipse by a rival scop, Heorrenda, and for the loss of his land-right and of the royal favor by recalling the misfortunes suffered by heroic persons of the long ago. After each brief, tragic recital he says: "That was endured, this likewise can be." The frank utterance of personal grief, the grim, mournful stoicism, and, above all, the strophic structure and the refrain, give the poem extraordinary interest.

"Deor's Lament."

The second of these poems, entitled, from the opening word, *Widsith*, or *The Far-Wanderer*, is a glorification of the poet and of the generosity of his royal patrons. The poem begins: "Widsith spake, unlocked his word-hoard; he who had travelled throughout most of the tribes and nations in the world." Widsith is an imaginary poet who pictures himself as having been at the courts of all the great kings and emperors of both the ancient and the Germanic world. The purpose seems to be to show the generosity with which rulers and nations have always delighted to honor their poets. After a long list of princes and peoples—"Attila ruled the Huns; Cæsar ruled the Greeks; Offa ruled the Angles"—Widsith says: "Thus through many a strange nation I travelled; therefore can I sing in the mead-hall how kingly heroes honored me with gifts." Then follows a series of nations—"I was with the Swedes, the Danes, the Saracens, the Hebrews, the Assyrians, the Indians, the Medes, and the Persians"—then a list of kings—Eormanric, Eadwine, Wulfhere—many of whom are said

"Widsith."

to have honored Widsith with gold and treasure. "Thus the gleemen roam thru the wide world; they tell their need and say their thanks; always south or north they visit a man prudent in speech, generous of gifts, who wishes praise to be uttered before the warriors, noble deeds to be performed, till light and life depart together; he gains renown, he has long-lasting glory." Whether or not this poem be as ancient as some scholars have thought, it reveals the high position occupied by the scop and the gleemen in Germanic and especially in Anglo-Saxon society.

II

England Before the Anglo-Saxon Invasions.

While Angles, Saxons, and Jutes were still unknown Germanic tribes, their future island-home was being made into a province of the Roman Empire. The very earliest inhabitants of Britain, that mysterious race which may have raised the huge circle of monoliths at Stonehenge, had given way—how early we do not know—to a Celtic-speaking people. Before the Roman conquest this people spread over France, Spain, and all the British Islands. The Celts were of an impetuous character, imaginative, curious, and quick to learn. The Roman historians tell us of their eagerness for news, of their delight in clever speech and quick retort. Their early literature shows a delicate fancy, a kind of wild grace and a love of beauty for its own sake, strikingly in contrast with the stern and stately poetry of the Anglo-Saxon scop. But this very quickness of sympathy and of intelligence proved fatal to their existence as independent peoples. When the Roman legions crossed from Gaul to Britain there was a short space of fierce resistance, and then the Celts accepted, probably as much from curiosity as from compulsion, the imposing Roman civilization. Some of the more

stubborn fled to the fastnesses of Wales and Scotland, but the greater part seem to have submitted to the Romans, as if by a kind of fascination, even to some extent giving up their own language for that of their conquerors. The Romans, like the English of our own day, carried wherever they went their splendid but somewhat rigid civilization, and by the end of the fourth century England was dotted with towns and villas where, amid pillared porticos, mosaic pavements, marble baths, forums, and hippodromes, a Roman emperor could find himself at home.

The Invasions.

This was the state of England when there began that remarkable series of movements on the part of the restless Germanic tribes which we know as the "migration." About the end of the fourth century, urged by a common impulse, tribe after tribe swept westward across the Rhine, and southward across the Danube; some came from the north by sea, to harry the coasts of Gaul and Britain; some scaled the Alps, and even the Pyrenees, to batter at the gates of Rome, or to plunder the rich lands and islands of the Mediterranean, and to found a kingdom in Africa. The Roman legions were recalled from Britain to guard the imperial city, the Roman officials withdrew, and the Celtic inhabitants, weakened by three centuries of civilized life, and accustomed to rely for defense on the strong sword of the Roman soldier, were left to struggle unaided against the savage raids of the Picts, and the pirate bands of Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, which appeared every spring in increasing numbers upon their coast. The Celts, however, did not submit themselves to the yoke of these savage Germanic invaders as they had done to the polished Romans. Not long after the year 400 the first band of Jutes landed on the island of Thanet at the invitation of the unwarlike Celts, to defend the latter against the Picts and Scots. Attracted by the wealth

and fertility of the country, and impressed with the helplessness of its inhabitants, the Jutes ere long turned from allies to enemies far worse than those against whom they had been employed. During the following centuries, in steadily increasing numbers, they fought their way grimly from seacoast into interior, slaying or enslaving the Celtic population, or driving it before them into the western half of the island, or across the sea into Brittany, and obliterating all the monuments of civilization bequeathed by Rome. The native and the Latinized Celtic languages simply disappeared from the parts of the island occupied by the Anglo-Saxons, leaving scarcely a trace on the speech of the conquerors. A few river-names, Thames, Avon, Cam, are Celtic. Many place-names contain the Latin suffixes -chester, -caster, and -wich, -wick (Winchester, Lancaster, Greenwich, Berwick), transmitted from Romans to English through the Celts.

Celt and Saxon.

During these years of struggle there began to grow up about the person of an obscure Celtic leader that cycle of stories which was to prove so fruitful of poetry both in France and in England—the legends of Arthur, founder of the Round Table, and defender of the western Britons against the weakening power of Rome and the growing fury of the barbarians. As the Angles and Saxons spread later over the western part of England, they seem to have absorbed the remaining inhabitants, who communicated to the conquering race its first leaven; they made it later more sensitive and receptive, and gave it a touch of extravagance and gayety, which, after being reinforced by similar elements in the temperament of the Norman-French invaders, was to blossom in the sweet humor of Chaucer, in the rich fancy of Spenser, and in the broad humanity of Shakespeare.

During the long period of ruthless conquest and unorganized settlement by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes,

there were growing slowly a number of little national groups among the conquerors; and after the year 600, with the appearance of four great kingdoms in Kent, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, each of which in turn assumed a more powerful and enduring leadership, there followed more settled conditions, under which civilization and literature could flourish. Missionaries, schools, and monasteries not only converted the pagan Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, but they also made possible familiarity with both the religious and the secular literature which circulated on the continent; they may perhaps have made possible the composition of such a long and stately epic poem as that most remarkable literary relic of early Germanic literature, *Beowulf*. Further, the monastic scribe was the agent who for the first time could record and preserve both traditional and contemporary poetry, which till then had been only precariously transmitted through the memories of gleemen, and circulated only as they sang before the nobles in the mead-hall.

Anglo-Saxon Civilization.

It was not till about 700 that the long poem entitled, from its hero, *Beowulf*, was composed in its present form. It is something over three thousand lines in length, and though consisting of two separate adventures, constitutes an artistic literary whole.

"Beowulf."

Hrothgar, king of the Danes, has built near the sea a magnificent hall, named Heorot, where he sits with his thanes at the mead-drinking, and listens to the chanting of the gleemen. For a while he lives in happiness, and is known far and wide as a splendid and liberal prince. But one night there comes from the march-land, the haunt of all unearthly and malign creatures, a terrible monster named Grendel. Entering the mead-hall he slays thirty of the sleeping Danes, and carries their corpses away to his lair. The next night the same thing is repeated. No mortal power

Hrothgar and Grendel.

seems able to cope with the gigantic foe. In the winter nights Grendel couches in the splendid hall, defiling all its bright ornaments. For twelve years this scourge afflicts the Danes, until Hrothgar's spirit is broken.

At last the story of Grendel's deeds crosses the sea to Gautland, where the stalwart Beowulf dwells with his uncle, King Hygelac. He determines to go to Hrothgar's assistance. With fourteen companions he embarks: "Departed then over the billowy sea the foamy-necked floater, most like to a bird." The next day the voyagers catch sight of the promontories of Hrothgar's land; and soon, from the top of the cliffs, they behold in the vale beneath them the famous hall, "rich and gold-variegated, most glorious of dwellings under the firmament." The young heroes in their "shining war byrnies" (coats of ring-mail), and with their spears like a "gray ash-forest," are ushered into the hall "where Hrothgar sits, old and gray, amid his band of nobles." Beowulf craves permission to cleanse Heorot, and Hrothgar consents that the Gauts shall abide Grendel's coming in the hall that night. Meanwhile, until darkness draws on, the thanes of Hrothgar and the followers of Beowulf sit drinking mead, "the bright sweet liquor," and listening to the songs of the gleeman. The feast draws to a close when Wealtheow, Hrothgar's queen, after solemnly handing the mead-cup to her lord and to Beowulf, and bidding them "be blithe at the beer-drinking," goes through the hall distributing gifts among the thanes. The king, queen, and their followers then withdraw to another building for the night, while Beowulf and his men lie down to wait for the coming of Grendel. All fall asleep except Beowulf, who "awaits in angry mood the fate of the battle."

The Coming of Beowulf.

The coming of the monster is described vividly: "Then came from the moors, under the misty hills, Grendel stalking. . . . The door, fast with fire-hardened bands,

burst open. On the many-colored floor the foe trod; he went, wroth of mood; from his eyes stood a horrid light like flame. . . . He saw in the hall many warriors sleeping, a kindred band. . . . Then his heart laughed." He seizes one of the warriors, bites his "bone-joints," drinks the blood from his veins, and greedily devours him even to the hands and feet. "Nearer he stepped, seized a stout-hearted warrior in his bed." That warrior, the strength of thirty men in his hand-grip, seizes Grendel. Terror-stricken, the monster turns to flee, but is held by the strength of Beowulf. The other warriors, awakened by the combat and the "song of terror sung by God's adversary," try to help with their swords, but no mortal weapon can wound Grendel. At last the monster wrenches his own arm from its socket and flees to his lair to die, leaving Beowulf to nail the grisly trophy in triumph above the door of Heorot.

The Fight in the Hall.

In the morning there is great rejoicing. The king, with the queen and her company of maidens, comes through the meadows to gaze in wonder on the huge arm and claw nailed beneath the gold roof of the hall. When the evening feast begins, Beowulf sits between the two sons of the king and receives the precious gifts—jewels, rings, and a golden necklace—which the queen presents to him. But after nightfall Grendel's mother comes to take vengeance for her son. She seizes one of Hrothgar's nobles, Æschere, and bears him away to her watery den.

Beowulf promises to pursue the new foe to the bottom of her fen-pool. With Hrothgar and a band of followers he marches along the cliffs and windy promontories which bound the moor on the seaward side, until he comes to Grendel's lair. It is a sea-pool, shut in by precipitous rocks, and overhung by the shaggy trunks and aged writhen boughs of a "joyless wood." Trembling passers-by have

The Fight Beneath the Sea.

seen fire fleeting on the waves at night, and the hart wearied by the hounds will lie down and die on these banks rather than plunge into the unholy waters. The pool is so deep that it is an hour before Beowulf reaches the bottom. Snakes and beasts of the shining deep attack him as he descends. At last he finds himself in a cave where the "mere-wife" is lurking, and a deadly struggle begins. Once the giantess throws Beowulf to the ground, and sitting astride his body draws out her broad, short knife to despatch him; but his coat of ring-mail saves him, and with a superhuman effort he struggles up again, throws away his broken sword, and seizes from a heap of arms a magic blade, forged by giants of old time; with it he hews off the head of Grendel's mother, and then that of Grendel, whose dead body he finds lying in the cave. So poisonous is the blood of Grendel that it melts the metal of the blade, leaving only the hilt in Beowulf's hand. When he reappears with his trophies at the surface of the water, all except his own thanes have given him up for dead and have returned home. Great is the jubilation when the hero appears at Heorot with his companions and throws upon the floor of the mead-hall the huge head, which four men can hardly carry.

The second great episode of the poem is Beowulf's fight with the Dragon of the Gold-Hoard. Beowulf has been reigning as king for fifty years and is now an old man, when calamity comes upon him and his people in the form of a dragon, which flies by night enveloped in fire; and which, in revenge for the theft of a gold cup from its precious hoard, burns the king's hall. Old as he is, Beowulf fights the dragon single-handed. He slays the monster in its lair, but himself receives his mortal hurt.

Beowulf and the Fire-Dragon.

The death of the old king is picturesque and moving. He bids his thane bring out from the dragon's den "the

gold-treasure, the jewels, the curious gems," in order that death may be softer to him, seeing the wealth he has gained for his people. Wiglaf, entering the cave of the "old twilight-flier," sees "dishes standing, vessels of men of yore, footless, their ornaments fallen away; there was many a helm old and rusty, and many armlets cunningly fastened," and over the hoard droops a magic banner, "all golden, locked by arts of song," from which a light is shed over the treasure. Beowulf gazes with dying eyes upon the precious things; then he asks that his thanes build for him a funeral barrow on a promontory of the sea, which the sailors, as they "drive their foaming barks from afar over the mists of floods, may see and name Beowulf's Mount."

The Death of Beowulf.

This is only a summary. The poem itself, however, is composed with a solid background of detailed realism. We see vividly the courtly manners and customs of the royal and the noble personages, the engraved swords, the "boar-helmets" and the "woven ring-mail" of the warriors, the benches and tables of the "antler-broad hall," the servants pouring the bright mead; we hear the stately, eloquent speeches, the scop's clear song; we feel the high loyalty of thanes and of kinsmen to their lord, the faithfulness and generosity of the king to his retainers.

Life Reflected in Beowulf.

Although the poem was composed in its present form in England early in the eighth century, the subject matter is not English. The places and the peoples are in Denmark and Sweden. The manners, the customs, the civilization, seem to be those of all the Germanic nations, as also the famous historical and legendary events which are frequently alluded to throughout the poem. These great persons and their heroic or tragic adventures, many of which are mentioned also in *Widsith*, are the heritage of all *Germania*. That, besides *Beowulf*, other epic poems

Other Anglo-Saxon Epics.

on these adventures were composed in Anglo-Saxon, we have direct evidence in the form of fragments of two poems, one of them dealing with a story mentioned in *Beowulf*—the war between Finn and Hnæf—the other consisting of two short passages from a poem of which we have several complete versions in continental languages—the story of *Waldere*.

The structure of Anglo-Saxon poetry is quite different from that of modern English poetry. The metrical unit is the single line, which regularly consists of four strongly accented syllables, with an unfixed number of unaccented syllables. This line is divided into two half-lines, each with two strong accents. Two or three of the accented syllables of the line begin with the same consonant sound—that is, they alliterate; the first accent of the second half-line is always alliterative. Rhyme is very rare. The following bit of vivid description (of Grendel's haunts) is taken from *Beowulf:*

Anglo-Saxon Verse-Form.

hie dýgel lónd
*w*árigeath, *w*úlf-hleothu, *w*índige naéssas,
*f*récne *f*én-gelad, thaer *f*yrgen-stréam
under *n*aéssa ge*n*ípu *n*íther gewíteth,
*f*lód under *f*óldan. Nis thaet *f*éor héonon.

[A secret land
They haunt, wolf-slopes, windy headlands,
Fearful fen-paths, where the mountain-stream
Under the shadows of cliffs downward departs,
The flood beneath the earth. That is not far hence.]

III

The immediate influence of the Romanized Celtic people and their civilization on the Anglo-Saxons was almost nothing. From such a poem as *The Ruin*, a melancholy lament over the crumbling towers and the fallen

walls of an abandoned city, we may guess at the utter devastation wrought in the earlier period by the armies of the invaders. What influence the Celts exerted was indirect, and appeared chiefly in the fields of learning and religion.

The Christianizing of England.

Christianity came into England in two different streams, one from Rome, one from Ireland, the latter having been converted from heathenism several centuries before. The first stream began late in the sixth century, with the coming of Augustine to Kent. Little by little, after the advent of this great missionary in the south of England, the new creed drove out the old, winning its way by virtue of its greater ideality and the authority with which it spoke of man's existence beyond the grave. This stream of religious influence, which came from Rome, overran south and central England. It produced some schools of learning, but almost no English literature. The second stream of Christian influence swept into Northumbria through the labors of the Irish missionaries, who were carrying their creed at the same time into France, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland. Eventually, at the Synod of Whitby (664), the Celtic ecclesiastical usages of the north were discarded in favor of the Roman and England was thus kept in closer touch with the intellectual and religious life of the continent. It is, nevertheless, to the north and east that we must look for the first blossomings of Christian poetry in England.

Bede and Cædmon.

Of all the monasteries which were founded in Northumbria by the Celtic missionaries from Ireland, two are most famous because of their connection with literature—Jarrow and Whitby. At Jarrow lived and died Bæda, known as the "Venerable Bede," a gentle, laborious scholar in whom all the learning of Northumbria was summed up. He wrote many books, all but one in Latin, the most notable being

(in Latin) the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (*Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*). It is from a passage in this book that we learn the story of Cædmon, the earliest known poet of Christian England. He was a humble and illiterate laboring man who lived near Whitby at the end of the seventh century. Bede tells us that at the feast, when the harp was passed round for each to sing in turn, Cædmon would rise and go to his house, because he knew nothing of the gleeman's art. But one night, when he had thus left the cheerful company and gone to the stable to tend the cattle, he fell asleep and had a wonderful dream. A figure stood beside him, saying: "Cædmon, sing to me." Cædmon answered: "Behold, I know not how to sing, and therefore I left the feast to-night." "Nevertheless, sing now to me," the figure said. "What shall I sing?" asked Cædmon. "Sing the beginning of created things," was the answer. Then in his dream Cædmon phrased some verses of the Creation, which in the morning he could remember. News of the wonderful gift which had been vouchsafed to the unschooled man was carried to Hild, the abbess of the foundation, and she commanded portions of the Scripture to be read to him, that he might paraphrase them into verse. So it was done; and from this time on Cædmon's life was given to his heaven-appointed task of turning the Old Testament narratives into song.

Biblical Poetry.

The poems which formerly were attributed to Cædmon (though not now regarded as his) consist of paraphrases of parts of Genesis, of Exodus, and of Daniel. Sometimes, especially in dealing with a war-like episode, the poet expands his matter freely, treating it with all the vigor and picturesqueness of the Germanic poetry of war. In Exodus, for instance, the most vivid and original passages are those which tell of the overwhelming of Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea.

The Egyptians and the Israelitish armies are described with a heathen scop's delight in the pomp and circumstance of battle, and the disaster which overtakes the Egyptian hosts is sung with martial vigor.

Cynewulf.

If we know little of Cædmon's life, we know still less of that of Cynewulf, a poet living a century later, who was perhaps the greatest of the Anglo-Saxon poets, if we except the unknown bard who composed *Beowulf*. We have, signed with Cynewulf's name in runes, two lives of saints, and a poem dealing with Christ's ascension. One other poem has been ascribed to him with some probability, *Andreas*, a very lively and naïve story of a saint's martyrdom and final triumph over his enemies.

The Riddles.

One of the most curious and most interesting of the Anglo-Saxon poems is a collection of *Riddles*. Riddles, which in the middle ages were considered a much more dignified literary form than they are to-day, when we relegate them to children and the "folk," had a wide European circulation. The Old English poet has treated his subjects with imagination and picturesqueness. The new moon is a young viking, sailing through the skies in his pirate ship, laden with spoils of battle, to build a citadel for himself in highest heaven; but the sun, a greater warrior, drives him away and seizes his land, until the night conquers the sun in turn. The iceberg shouts and laughs as it plunges through the wintry sea, eager to crush the fleet of hostile ships. The sword in its scabbard is a mailed fighter, who dashes exultingly into the battle-play, and then is sad because women upbraid him over the fate of the heroes he has slain.

The Phœnix, a poem with a Latin original, derives a special interest from the fact that it is the only Anglo-Saxon poem of any length which shows a delight in the soft and radiant moods of nature, as opposed to

her fierce and grim aspects. In the land where the Phœnix dwells "the groves are all behung with blossoms . . . the boughs upon the trees are ever laden, the fruit is aye renewed through all eternity." The music of the wonderful bird, as it goes aloft "to meet that gladsome gem, God's candle," is "sweeter and more beauteous than any art of song." When the thousand years of its life are done, it flies away to a lonely Syrian wood, and builds its own holocaust of fragrant herbs, which the sun kindles. Out of the ashes a new Phœnix is born, "richly dight with plumage, as it was at first, radiantly adorned," and flies back to its home in the enchanted land of summer. At the end the history of the bird is interpreted as an allegory of the death and resurrection of Christ, and of his ascent to heaven amid the ministering company of saints. The poem has a fervor and enthusiasm lacking to the Latin original, and is the work of a good poet. It has been pointed out that the fanciful description of the bird's home-land is remarkably reminiscent of the old Celtic tales about the Land of Eternal Youth; and certainly it is not difficult to see, in the bright colors and happy fancy of the poem, the working of the Celtic imagination, as well as the transforming touch of hope which had been brought into men's lives by Christianity.

"The Phœnix."

Besides the poetry attributed to Cædmon and to Cynewulf and their schools, there exist a few short poems, lyrics, or "dramatic lyrics," of the greatest interest. One of these, called *The Wife's Lament*, gives us a glimpse of one of the harsh customs of our ancestors. A wife, accused of faithlessness, has been banished from her native village, and compelled to live alone in the forest; from her place of exile she pours out her moan to the husband who has been estranged from her by false slanderers. *The Lover's Message* is a kind of companion piece to this. The speaker in the

Love-Poems.

little poem is the tablet of wood upon which an absent lover has carved a message to send to his beloved. It tells her that he has now a home for her in the south, and bids her, as soon as she hears the cuckoo chanting of his sorrow in the copsewood, to take sail over the ocean pathway to her lord, who waits and longs for her. These are the first two little love-poems in English.

Three other poems require brief mention. In *The Seafarer* the poet, after describing the bitter misery of the sailor's life amidst winter storms, confesses the prevailing Anglo-Saxon passion in a declaration that the charm of his life outweighs all the attractions of a warm and comfortable home on the shore. The *Dream of the Rood* is an intensely emotional vision of the cross on which the Saviour died. The wonderful and glorious tree itself speaks, telling the story of the crucifixion, and the dreamer replies with a confession of the wretchedness of his sins, and of the redeeming power of the cross.

The longest and most perfect in form of these half-lyrical elegies or poems of sentiment is *The Wanderer*.

"The Wanderer."

It is a mournful plaint by one who must "travel o'er the water-track, stir with his hands the rime-cold sea, and struggle on the paths of exile," while he muses upon the joys and glories of a life that has passed away forever. "Often," he says, "it seems to him in fancy as if he clasps and kisses his lord, and on his knees lays hand and head, even as erewhile"; but he soon wakes friendless, and sees before him only "the fallow waves, sea-birds bathing and spreading their wings, falling hoar-frost and snow mingled with hail." Rapt away again by his longing, he beholds his friends and kinsmen hovering before him in the air; he "greets them with snatches of song, he scans them eagerly, comrades of heroes; soon they swim away again; the sailor-souls do not bring hither many old familiar songs." And at the close the Wanderer breaks out with

a lament over the departed glories of a better time: "Where is gone the horse? Where is gone the hero? Where is gone the giver of treasure? Where are gone the seats of the feast? Where are the joys of the hall? Ah, thou bright cup! Ah, thou mailed warrior! Ah, the prince's glory! How has the time passed away . . . as if it had not been!" There is a wistful sadness and a lyric grace in this poem which suggests once more the Celtic leaven at work in the vehement Anglo-Saxon genius. It suggests, too, a state of society fallen into ruin, a time of disaster. Perhaps, before it was written, such a time had come for England, and especially for Northumbria.

The Danish Invasions.

While the Anglo-Saxons had been settling down in England to a life of agriculture, their pagan kinsmen who remained on the continent had continued to lead their wild freebooting life on the sea. Toward the end of the eighth century bands of Danes began to harass the English coasts. Northumbria, the seat and centre of English learning, at first bore the main force of their attacks. The very monastery of Jarrow, in which Bæda had written his *Ecclesiastical History*, was plundered, and its inhabitants put to the sword. The monastery of Whitby, where Cædmon had had his vision, was only temporarily saved by the fierce resistance of the monks. By the middle of the ninth century the Danes had made themselves masters of Northumbria, and the flourishing Anglo-Saxon civilization, the schools, the literature, were blotted out. The Danes were such men as the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons had been four hundred years before—worshippers of the old gods, ruthless assailants of a religion, literature, and society which they did not understand. In Wessex the heroism of King Alfred (871–901) turned back the tide of warlike invaders. The Danes, in accordance with the terms of their truce, settled thickly in the north and east, and three

centuries later we find the language of those districts containing many words borrowed from the Scandinavian settlers, but until the Norman conquest, two centuries later, the only literature which remains to us was produced in Wessex. It is almost entirely a literature of prose; the best of it was the work of King Alfred himself, or produced under his immediate encouragement.

King Alfred.

As a child King Alfred had seen Rome, and had lived for a time at the great court of Charles the Bald in France; and the spectacle of these older and richer civilizations had filled him with a desire to give to his struggling subjects something of the heritage of the past. When, after a long, desperate warfare, he had won peace from the Danes, he called about him learned monks from the sheltered monasteries of Ireland and Wales, and made welcome at his court all strangers who could bring him a manuscript or sing to him an old song. He spurred on his priests and bishops to write. He himself learned a little Latin, in order that he might translate into the West-Saxon tongue certain books which he believed would be most useful and interesting to Englishmen, putting down the sense, he says, "sometimes word for word, sometimes meaning for meaning, as I had learned it from Plegmund, my archbishop, and Asser, my bishop, and Grimbald, my mass-priest, and John, my mass-priest." He selected for translation a famous and influential philosophical work of the middle ages, the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boëthius; a manual of universal history and geography by Orosius; and a treatise on the duties of priests and learned men, the *Pastoral Care* or "Shepherd's Book" of Gregory, copies of which he sent to all his bishops in order that they and their priests might learn to be better shepherds of their flocks. More important still, he seems to have been the one who caused to be translated Bæda's *Ecclesiastical History*, thus giving a native English dress to

the first great piece of historical writing which had been done in England. Lastly, he appears to have aided in the collection of the dry entries of the deaths of kings and the installations of bishops, which the monks of various monasteries were in the habit of making on the Easter rolls; this was expanded into a clear and picturesque narrative, the greatest space, of course, being taken up with the events of his own reign. This, known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, is the oldest monument of English prose, and is, with one exception (the Gothic Gospels), the most venerable piece of extended prose writing in a modern European language.

Nevertheless, despite all his efforts, King Alfred does not seem to have succeeded in recreating a vital native literature in England. The sermons or *Homilies* of the eloquent and devoted Ælfric (1000), however, here and there rise to the rank of literature, by reason of the picturesqueness of some religious legend which they treat, by the fervor of their piety, and by reason of their clear, vivid, flowing style. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, also, which continued to grow in the monasteries of Peterborough, Winchester, and Ely, here and there records a bit of ringing verse. One of these poetic passages, known as the *Battle of Brunanburh*, is entered under the year 937. Another late poem, the *Death of Byrtnoth*, also called the *Battle of Maldon*, bears the date 991. These are both accounts of stubborn and heroic battles by the English against the Danes. The latter is the swan-song of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Later Anglo-Saxon Literature.

In passing judgment on Anglo-Saxon literature we must remember that the fragmentary survivals unquestionably represent only in the most imperfect way what must at one time have been a rich and extensive literature. Ancient poetry and prose could be preserved only if written down, and then only if the manuscripts them-

selves survived the ravages of accident and time. The two centuries of devastation wrought by the Danes, especially to the flourishing culture of Northumbria and Mercia, devastation which was marked by the burning and plundering of monasteries, almost the only safe and permanent depositaries for manuscripts, resulted, as King Alfred complains, in the almost complete destruction of written literature. Six hundred years later, at the dissolution of the English monasteries, their libraries again were almost totally destroyed, and it was only through the activities of a few enthusiastic antiquaries that any of the literary monuments from the manuscript period were saved from vandalism. Only four manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon poetry are extant—one in the cathedral at Vercelli, Italy; one in the cathedral at Exeter; one at Oxford, and one in London. For the most part we must reconstruct with the eye and ear of imagination the stately and heroic songs which thrilled the hearts of kings and warriors, of clerks and peasants, in every hall and hamlet of England for six centuries before the coming of the Normans.

Survival of Anglo-Saxon Literature.

CHAPTER II

THE NORMAN-FRENCH PERIOD

The Normans ("North-men"), a group of Scandinavian sea-rovers who settled in northwestern France about 900, were an extraordinary people. While many of their fellows were invading and settling in England, they appeared off the coast of France; and under their leader, Hrolf the Ganger (the "Walker"), they pushed up the Seine in their black boats, wasting and burning to the very gates of Paris. The French won peace by granting them the broad and rich lands in the northwest, known henceforth as Normandy. Unlike the other northern peoples, they showed a remarkable ability to retain their own individuality while assimilating the southern civilization. They married with the French women, and adopted French manners and the French tongue. In a little over a century they had grown from a barbarous horde of sea-robbers into the most polished and brilliant people of Europe, whose power was felt even in the Mediterranean and the Far East. They united in a remarkable way impetuous daring and cool practical sense. Without losing anything of their northern bravery in war, they absorbed all the southern suppleness and wit, all the southern love of splendor and art, and moreover developed a genius for organizing and conducting their government. Before the battle of Hastings the Anglo-Saxons had been in cultural and literary contact mainly with the northern part of Europe. The intimate contact with the Scandinavian nations is reflected in the subject-matter of *Beowulf*, in the strophic form of several English poems, in the form

The Normans.

and content of the *Runic Poem*. The political contact culminated in the long reign of Cnut, the Danish king who had transferred his court to England. From the moment Duke William overcame King Harold, however, English civilization, the government, and the church were brought completely into the southern continental system. The Normans not only brought the terror of the sword and the strong hand of conquest; more important still, they became the transmitters to England of French culture and literature.

Effects of the Norman Conquest.

No one among the conquered people of England, however, could then have foreseen that the invasion was to prove a national blessing; for the sternness and energy with which the Norman king and his nobles set about organizing the law, the civil government, and the church in the island brought with it much oppression. Over the length and breadth of England rose those strong castles whose gray and massive walls still frown over the pleasant English landscape. Less forbidding than these, but at first no less suggestive of the foreigner, splendid stone abbeys and minsters gradually took the place of gloomy little wooden churches. Forest laws of terrible harshness preserved the "tall deer" which the king "loved as his life."

Anglo-Norman Literature.

Within a half-century the Anglo-Saxon nobility and landed gentry had been completely displaced by Normans, while the English church had been filled with French monks and priests, so that all those classes which produced or read either polite or learned literature were Norman-French. Furthermore, the constant and intimate contact of the Anglo-Norman nobility with France during the following two hundred years made them the medium through which England was thoroughly familiarized with French literary material and literary forms. The Anglo-Saxon population, which placidly continued to employ

only the English language, comprised only that part of the population which counted scarcely at all in literature and learning. In the court and camp and castle, in the school, in Parliament, and on the justice bench, French alone was spoken; while in the monastery and in the church, reading, writing, and even conversation were all carried on in Latin. It is small wonder that we find so little English prose or poetry recorded before the year 1300. The literature which was in demand, and which consequently came to constitute the entire repertory of the minstrels—who had completely displaced the Anglo-Saxon scop and gleeman—was exclusively in the French language, much of it composed by Normans and Frenchmen in England, much of it produced on the continent and brought across the channel by wandering minstrels. These works in Anglo-French fall into two divisions: narrative and didactic. The former includes epics, romances, and tales; the latter history, saints' lives and miracles, and a number of works which may be called utilitarian. Besides these, there are also preserved numerous lyrical and satirical poems, and some plays. The variety of works in Latin is wide. In the field of pure literature are satires and drinking-songs, love-songs, church hymns, and miracle and scriptural plays. In the field of utilitarian writings are chronicles, legends, and miracles of saints, works on philosophy, logic, and theology, numerous sermons, and treatises on the natural sciences—astrology, mathematics, medicine, and law. Taken as a whole, the literature composed or circulated in England during the two and a half centuries after the battle of Hastings was rich, varied, and extensive; but unfortunately very little of it was in the English language.

If a prophet had arisen to tell the Norman barons and the great bishops and abbots of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that neither French nor Latin, but English, was destined to be the standard speech of their

descendants within one or two hundred years, he would undoubtedly have been laughed at. Nevertheless, incredible as it would have seemed, this is precisely what happened. Although not employed in written documents, the English tongue still was universally spoken by the lower classes, and even by the young children of the nobility, for we hear that the latter had to be taught their French in their childhood. About 1200 English again began to appear in a few books, disputing a place by the side of the elegant language of the conquerors. Its reappearance, however, reveals it to be a greatly changed language. Even before the coming of the Normans the standard, conservative, literary language of the Anglo-Saxons had shown a tendency to simplify or discard the highly complicated Germanic inflectional endings. But the complete destruction of the English-using culture, and the relegation of English speech to illiterate peasants and serfs, removed every conservative influence, and changes followed in a rapid flood. The article "the," for example, had its nineteen forms reduced to one. From nine quite different noun declensions, each with seven or eight forms, the number shrank to one, with three forms. Grammatical gender disappeared. Verb inflection also was greatly simplified. The number of conjugations was lessened, strong ("irregular") verbs became weak ("regular"), personal endings became fewer. Prepositions, instead of taking either the genitive, dative, or accusative, took only the accusative case.

Changes in English Speech.

By 1300, when English again assumed the position of the speech of culture, its grammar was still further simplified, its inflectional endings were more nearly lost altogether. Furthermore, the vocabulary was immensely enriched by the "naturalization" of thousands of French words. These are very largely words naming peculiarly French ideas, or at least ideas, objects,

The Result.

and institutions which were restricted principally to those social classes which had for two centuries spoken, read, and written only French. Very early we find in English documents such words as *castle*, *court*, *crown*, *tower*, *dungeon*, *justice*, *prison*, *sot* ("fool"), *peace*, *rent*, *charity*, *privilege*—almost every one of which reveals the comparative social positions of the French and the English-speaking classes. In spite of the subsequent loss of many words, in spite of many strange spellings and forms, the English of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is easily recognized as the same language which we speak to-day, the medium in which appeared the artistic and cultivated literary work of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, of Thackeray.

Mediæval Literature.

Mediæval literature was disseminated in two ways. The first and more permanent method was through copying by scribes. In every monastery one part of the cloister, or one room, was dedicated to the labor of these copyists. In this scriptorium, on wooden shelves, were kept the manuscript books of the monastery. The most skilful and competent members of the community spent hours of daily labor in the pleasing task of copying these written books. Working with quill pen on sheets of sheepskin or calfskin, the scribe copied slowly and carefully, word by word and line by line, the page before him. The reproduction of literature, or of didactic or religious works, after this fashion was a slow and very costly process. The expensiveness of these manuscript books was often increased because of the insertion of elaborate and beautiful drawings or illuminations. Naturally such books could be owned only by the wealthy. Sometimes a single manuscript would constitute the whole library of a castle. It would contain not only sermons, saints' lives, medical recipes, and a treatise on the seven deadly sins, but also songs, lyrics, hymns, and usually a large number

of metrical romances, the most popular form of literature in the Middle Ages.

The metrical romances, however, were circulated chiefly by the minstrels. These picturesque travelling entertainers were among the most popular persons in the Middle Ages. They journeyed from country to country, from city to city. The minstrels of lower degree entertained villagers, rustics, and townspeople with juggling tricks, dances, and songs, or by the recitation of long narratives of knightly or miraculous adventure. At the other end of the scale minstrels of great skill were attached to the courts of bishops, nobles, and even kings. Minstrels often organized their own guilds. The most skilful had a large repertory, constantly increased by new stories learned from their fellows. They themselves seem never to have recorded their tales, but most of the romances which we know they sang were written in manuscripts, either by monks or by other trained scribes who made a business of producing and selling books.

The Minstrels.

The metrical romances which composed the bulk of the minstrel repertory had flourished as a literary type in France (and in the French language in England) for two centuries before they began to appear in their English dress. These fascinating poetic tales—which remind us strongly of some of the narrative poems of Scott—were mostly accounts of the heroic or marvellous adventures of those mediæval heroes—the outstanding figures in the world of chivalry and romance—the warlike and courtly knights who loved "trouthe and honour, fredom and courtesye." The subject was most often the adventures of the knight against robbers, giants, or Saracens, or against the buffets of poverty, adverse love, or other misfortune. Upon a background of feasts and wars and tournaments, of rich armor, gay dress, and horses, hawks, and hounds, these

The Metrical Romances.

romances told of the thrilling, the extravagant, the supernatural. Above all, they emphasized the sentiment of woman-worship, which, originating in the intensely devotional cult of the Virgin Mary, had been secularized by the troubadours of Provence, and had become a vital part of the great creed of feudal chivalry.

The material of these richly bedecked tales came from three principal sources—the matter of Britain, the matter of France, and the matter of "Rome." From Britain came the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table; from France the tales of Charlemagne and his twelve peers; from "Rome" came the tales of classical times and of more mysterious places—the story of Troy, the conquests of Alexander, and the marvels of the Orient. Of all these storehouses, the richest by far was the matter of Britain—Wales and Brittany—where for generations, perhaps for centuries, there had been growing up a mass of legend connected with King Arthur. A number of these Arthurian legends were gathered up, before the middle of the twelfth century, in a great Latin work called the *Historia Regum Britanniæ*, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Welsh writer who, though pretending to write a sober narrative of historical fact, was roundly denounced by many of his own contemporaries for filling his chronicle with the products of his own imagination. The book was immediately translated into French verse by Wace, of Jersey, and through this channel came, about the year 1200, into the hands of Lawman,[1] the first writer who treated this material in the English tongue.

Material of the Romances.

All that we know of Lawman, and of how he came to

[1] Though his name has been erroneously spelled and pronounced for seventy years as "Layamon," its correct form is "Lawman." The name harks back to the period of dim antiquity when every little community had one member whose duty it was to act as a repository and interpreter of customary law in case of village disputes.

write his *Brut*, he tells himself in the quaint and touching words with which the metrical history opens:

"There was a priest in the land was named Lawman; he was the son of Leovenath—may God be gracious to him! He dwelt at Ernley, at a noble church upon Severn bank. . . . It came to him in mind and in his chief thought that he would tell the noble deeds of the English; what the men were named, and whence they came, who first had the English land after the flood. . . . Lawman began to journey wide over this land, and procured the noble books which he took for authority. He took the English book that Saint Bede made;[1] another he took in Latin, that Saint Albin made and the fair Austin . . .;[2] the third book he took . . . that a French clerk made, named Wace. . . . Lawman laid these books before him and turned over the leaves; lovingly he beheld them—may the Lord be merciful to him! Pen he took with fingers, and wrote on book-skin, and compressed the three books into one."

Lawman or Layamon.

The poem opens with an account of how "Eneas the duke," after the destruction of Troy, flees into Italy, and builds him a "great burg." After many years his great-grandson, Brutus, sets out with all his people to find a new land in the west. They pass the Pillars of Hercules, "tall posts of strong marble stone," where they find the mermaidens, "beasts of great deceit, and so sweet that many men are not able to quit them." After further adventures in Spain and France, they come at length to the shores of England, and land "at Dartmouth in Totnes." The verse has now run on for two thousand lines, and the story itself has just begun. But leisurely as Lawman is, he is seldom tedious; the story lures one on from page to page, until one forgets the enormous length. In treat-

Lawman's Brut.

[1] The Anglo-Saxon version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.

[2] Probably the original Latin version of Bede, the authorship being mistaken by Lawman.

ing the Arthur legends, Lawman is not content merely to transcribe his predecessors. His own home was near the borders of Wales, where these legends were native; and he either first recorded or invented several additions of the utmost importance. The most notable of these are his story of the founding of the Round Table, and his account of the fays who are present at Arthur's birth and who carry him after his last battle to the mystic isle of Avalon.

Other Romances.

The publication, within a few years, in three languages, of a fascinating body of material so available for literary treatment could not be overlooked by poets and minstrels. Within a few decades Arthur and his train of great knights, Gawain, Lancelot, Percival, Tristram, and many others had kindled the imagination of writers and audiences, and appeared as the leading figures in scores of courtly or popular romances in England, France, and Germany. Arthur became the incarnation of chivalry. Most of the romances received their first literary treatment in France, the centre of mediæval internationalism in culture and literature. Almost all the English romances of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are free renderings from French originals. This is true not only of those which deal with continental heroes, like Charlemagne and Alexander, or which tell a tale of continental origin, like *Amis and Amiloun* (a tale of sworn brothers-in-arms) and *Floris and Blancheflour* (a romantic love-story); but also of the Arthur stories, whose source was British, and even of the stories of purely English heroes, Bevis of Hampton, and Guy of Warwick. But of all the Arthurian romances in English of this period, such as *Sir Tristram*, *Arthour and Merlin*, *Morte d'Arthure*, and *The Awentyres* (adventures) *of Arthur at the Tarn Wathelinq* (Tarn Wadling in Cumberland), there is one, the best of all, and one of the most charming romances of the world. This is *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*. Its date is perhaps as

late as 1380, but it is the culmination of the whole school of the preceding two centuries, and therefore is legitimately to be regarded as "Norman-French."

"Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight."

When the poem opens, King Arthur and his court are gathered in the hall at Camelot to celebrate the feast of the New Year. The king, "so busied him his young blood and his wild brain," will not eat until some adventure has befallen. As the first course comes in, "with cracking of trumpets," and the "noise of nakers (drums), with noble pipes," there suddenly rushes in at the hall door a gigantic knight, clothed entirely in green, mounted on a green foal, and bearing in one hand a holly bough, in the other a great axe. He rides to the dais, and challenges any knight to give him a blow with his axe, and to abide one in turn. Gawayne, the king's nephew, smites off the head of the Green Knight, who quietly picks it up by the hair, and holds it out toward Gawayne, until the lips speak, giving him rendezvous at the Green Chapel on the next New Year's Day.

On All-Hallow's Day Gawayne sets out upon his horse Gringolet, and journeys through North Wales, past Holyhead into the wilderness of Wirral; "sometimes with worms (serpents) he wars, with wolves and bears," with giants and wood-satyrs, until at last on Christmas Eve he comes to a great forest of hoar oaks. He calls upon Mary, "mildest mother so dear," to help him. Immediately he sees a fair castle standing on a hill; and asking shelter he is courteously received by the lord of the castle, his fair young wife, and an ugly ancient dame.

After the Christmas festivities are over, Gawayne attempts to set forth again on his quest, but is assured that the Green Chapel is so near he may safely remain till the day of his appointment. His host now prepares for a great hunt, to last three days, and a jesting compact is made between them that at the end of each day they shall give each other whatever good thing they have

won. While her lord is absent on the hunt the lady of the castle tries in vain to induce Gawayne to make love to her, and bestows upon him a kiss. Anxious to fulfil his compact, he in turn gives the kiss to her lord each night when the hunt is over, and receives as a counter-gift the spoils of the chase. At their last meeting the lady persuades Gawayne to take as a gift a green belt which will protect him from mortal harm. Thinking it "a jewel for the jeopardy" that he is to run at the Green Chapel, he keeps the gift a secret, and thus proves false to his compact.

On New Year's morning he sets out with a guide through a storm of snow, past forests and cliffs, where "each hill has a hat and a mist-cloak," to find the Green Chapel. It proves to be a grass-covered hollow mound, in a desert valley, "the most cursed kirk," says Gawayne, "that ever I came in." The Green Knight appears, and deals a blow with his axe upon Gawayne's bent neck. But he only pierces the skin, and Gawayne, seeing the blood fall on the snow, claps on his helmet, draws his sword, and declares the compact fulfilled. The Green Knight then discloses the fact that he himself is the lord of the castle where Gawayne has just been entertained, that the ugly ancient dame who dwells with him is the fairy-woman, Morgain la Fay, who, because of her hatred of Guinevere, had sent him to frighten her at the New Year's feast with the sight of a severed head talking, and who has been trying to lead Gawayne into bad faith and untruthfulness, in order that she may grieve Guinevere, Arthur's queen. By his loyalty to his host Gawayne has been saved, except for the slight wound as punishment for concealing the gift of the girdle. Gawayne swears to wear the "love-lace" in remembrance of his weakness; and ever afterward each knight of the Round Table, and every lady of Arthur's court, wears a bright green belt for Gawayne's sake.

The picturesque and nervous language of the poem, its

bright humor and fancy, its characterizations, the vivid beauty of its descriptions, as well as the skilful structure, and especially the pictures of English castle life in the Christmas holidays, and the detailed and lively accounts of the hunting of the boar, the fox, and the deer, all contribute to make this the most delightful blossom of English romance.

"Cursor Mundi."

While the shimmering tapestry and cloth of gold of these bright romances was being woven to beguile the tedium of castle halls, a more sober literary fabric grew under the patient hands of monks and religious enthusiasts. The *Cursor Mundi*, the author of which is unknown, deserves particular comment. Though religious in aim and in matter, it shows a wholesome secular desire to be entertaining. The author, in beginning, laments the absorption of the readers of his day in frivolous romance, and proposes to compete against these vain tales of earthly love with a tale of divine love which shall be equally thrilling. He then proceeds to tell in flowing verse the story of God's dealings with man, from the creation to the final redemption, following in general the biblical narrative, but adorning it with popular legends, both sacred and secular, and with all manner of quaint digressions. The ambition of the author has really been accomplished; his book is indeed a "religious romance," and may well have been a respectable rival of its more worldly brothers, in catching the ear of such readers as were willing to be edified at the same time that they were entertained.

Richard Rolle of Hampole.

Of another religious writer whose work rises to the dignity of literature, the name and story have fortunately been preserved. This is Richard Rolle, the hermit of Hampole, in southern Yorkshire, who was born about 1300 and died in 1349. In his youth he went to Oxford, then at the height of its fame as a centre of scholastic learning; but the mysticism and erratic ardor of his

nature made him soon revolt against the dry intellectuality of the scholastic teaching. He left college, made a hermit's shroud out of two of his sister's gowns and his father's hood, and began the life of a religious solitary and mystic. His cell at Hampole, near a Cistercian nunnery, was after his death visited as a miracle-working shrine, and cared for by the nuns. He wrote numerous canticles of divine love, many of which, though in prose, are intense devotional lyrics.

But of all the religious writings of this period, by far the most beautiful are three poems, one lyric, one narrative, the third theological, which approach the subject of divine love, or wrath, from the personal side, and treat it with personal intimacy. The first is the famous "Love Rune" of Thomas de Hales, a monk of the Minor Friars. He tells us in the first stanza that he was besought by a maid of Christ to make her a love-song, in order that she might learn therefrom how to choose a worthy and faithful lover. The monkish poet consents, but goes on to tell her how false and fleeting is all worldly love; how all earthly lovers vanish and are forgotten.

The "Love Rune" of Thomas de Hales.

Hwer is Paris and Heleyne
That weren so bryght and feyre on ble?
Amadas, Tristram, and Dideyne,
Yseude, and alle the?
Ector, with his scharpe meyne,
And Cesar riche of worldes fee?
Heo beoth iglyden ut of the reyne,
So the scheft is of the clee.

[Where is Paris and Helen, that were so bright and fair of face? Amadas, Tristram, Dido, Iseult, and all those? Hector with his sharp strength, and Cæsar rich with the world's fee (wealth)? They be glided out of the realm, as the shaft is from the clew (bowstring).]

"But there is another lover," the poet continues, who is "richer than Henry our King, and whose dwelling is

fairer than Solomon's house of jasper and sapphire. Choose Him, and may God bring thee to His bride-chamber in Heaven." The poem is well-nigh perfect in form, and for rich and tender melody bears comparison with the best lyrical work of Shakespeare's age. It gleams like a jewel even among the great mass of skilled sacred—and secular—song of the time.

"The Pearl." The second religious poem which deserves to be classed with this by reason of its beauty and its emotional appeal, is much longer, and written in stanzas with a complicated rhyme-scheme. It is called *The Pearl*. The grief-stricken poet falls asleep on the grave of a young girl, "nearer to him than aunt or niece"; whom he symbolizes as his "Pearl." In a vision he sees her, and beholds the celestial country where she dwells. He dreams that he is transported to a wonderful land, through which a musical river flows over pearly sand, and stones that glitter like stars on a winter night. Around him are "crystal cliffs so clear of kind," forests that gleam like silver and ring with the melody of bright-hued birds. On the other side of the river, at the foot of a gleaming cliff, he sees a maid sitting, clothed in bright raiment trimmed with pearls, and in the midst of her breast a great pearl. She rises and comes toward him. Then the mourner tries to cross over, but being unable, cries out to know if she is indeed his pearl, since the loss of which he has been "a joyless jeweller." The maiden tells him that his pearl is not really lost, gently reproves the impatience of his grief, and expounds some of the mysteries of heaven, where she reigns as a queen with Mary. The mourner begs to be taken to her abiding-place; she tells him that he may see, but cannot enter, "that clean cloister." She bids him go along the river-bank until he comes to a hill. Arrived at the top, he sees afar off the celestial city, "pitched upon gems," with its walls of jasper and streets of gold. At the wonder of

the sight he stands, "still as a dazed quail," and gazing sees, "right as the mighty moon gan rise," the Virgins walking in procession with the Lamb of God. The maiden is one of them.

> Then saw I there my little queen—
> Lord! much of mirth was that she made
> Among her mates.

He strives in transport to cross over and be with her, but it is not pleasing to God that he should come, and the dreamer awakes.

"Debate Between the Body and the Soul."

The third religious poem, remarkable for its skilful structure and finished style, is the *Debate Between the Body and the Soul;* the subject is treated also in several Latin and French versions, but the English is markedly the best. The poet, who has fallen into a deep slumber, sees lying on a bier the body of a proud knight, from which issues a dim shape, the soul, lamenting and bitterly reproaching the body for its pride, gluttony, and envy, which have sentenced the soul to eternal damnation. The body answers that the blame belongs to the soul, who has always been the master, and a debate ensues concerning the responsibility for the wretched plight of both. Finally a host of devils appear from hell:

> Thei weren ragged, rove, and tayled,
> With brode bulches on here bac,
> Scharpe clauwes, longe nayled;
> No was no lime withoute lac.
> On alle halve it was asayled
> With mani a devel, foul and blac;
> Merci crying litel availede,
> Hwan Crist it wolde so harde wrac.

[They were ragged, rough, and tailed, with broad bulges on their back, sharp claws, long nailed; no limb was without deformity. On every side it was assailed with many a devil foul and black; crying "mercy" little availed, when Christ wished it such hard vengeance.]

With horse and hounds the devils pursued him into a sulphurous pit; the earth locked itself again; and the dreamer awoke, cold with fear. The poem is notable for its vividness, as well as its phrasal and haunting lyric power.

Fusion of Saxon and French Metrical Systems.

The amalgamation of the English and French peoples and their cultures produced important results in the metre as well as in the vocabulary and literary content of the new language. Anglo-Saxon poetry had depended for its rhythmical effect upon two devices, alliteration and accent. The number of syllables in any given line could vary greatly, and the accents could fall anywhere in the line. The result was that the rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse was exceedingly loose and pliable. Anglo-French verse depended upon two devices quite different from these—rhyme, and a fixed number of syllables; the metrical system was therefore very definite and exact. When the fusion came there was a struggle as to which system should prevail in the new language. Some of the English poets, even as late as the authors of *Piers the Plowman*, stood out for the old system of accent and alliteration, without rhyme and without a fixed number of syllables; others imitated slavishly the French system of rhyme and uniform line-length; others, like the author of *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*, wrote stanzas in the looser alliterating metre, with rhyming verses at intervals. Still others wrote in the alliterating measure, but adopted more or less elaborate rhyme-schemes. The final outcome of the struggle, however, was that English verse gave up regular alliteration, retaining it only as an occasional decoration. The principle of accent, however, was retained; but, under the influence of the French prosody, a system dependent on a fixed and regular number of syllables, with almost absolute alternation between accented and unaccented syl-

lables, was adopted. Here again, as in the case of the vocabulary, the merging of Anglo-Saxon and French had a most happy result. It is by reason of this merging that English is capable of more subtle and varied lyrical effects than almost any other modern language.

Nor did the poets fail to show, even as early as the thirteenth century, their appreciation of what an exquisite instrument had fallen into their hands; for we possess several songs of that period, and a little later, which have in them more than a promise of Herrick and Shelley. They are mostly songs of love and of spring. The best known is perhaps the *Cuckoo Song*, with its refrain of "Loude sing Cuckoo!"; but even more charming are the spring-song "Lent is come with love to town," and the love-song called *Allisoun*, with its delightful opening:

Lyric Qualities.

> Bitwene Mersh and Averil
> When spray[1] begineth to springe.
> The little fowles[2] have hyre[3] will
> On hyre lud[4] to singe.

The England which finds utterance in these songs is a very different England from that which had spoken in *The Wanderer*, and *The Seafarer*. It is no longer only the fierce and gloomy aspects of nature, but also her bright and laughing moods, that are sung. The imaginations of men work now not only in terms of war but also of peace. England is no longer isolated; its culture is continental, international. Its intellectual and emotional life is rich and variegated. The Norman invasion has done its work. The conquerors have ceased to be such, have ceased also to be a class apart, for foreign wars and centuries of domestic intercourse have broken down the distinction between men of Norman and men of Anglo-

Result of the Norman Conquest.

[1] Foliage. [2] Birds. [3] Their. [4] Voice.

Saxon blood. The new language is formed, a new and vigorous national life is everywhere manifest. The time is ripe for a new poet, great enough to gather up and make intelligible to itself this shifting, many-colored life; and Chaucer is at hand.

CHAPTER III

THE AGE OF CHAUCER

I

Geoffrey Chaucer was born about 1340. His father, one of the Corporation of Vintners, was at one time a purveyor to King Edward III. It was probably through this business connection with the court that Chaucer, when about seventeen, became a page in the household of the King's daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Clarence. Two years later he went with the King's army to France, where he saw unrolled the brilliant pageant of mediæval war, as the French chronicler Froissart has pictured it, at a time when chivalry and courtesy had flamed into their greatest splendor. He beheld the unsuccessful siege of the city of Rheims; was captured by the French, and was held as a prisoner of war until ransomed.

Chaucer's Early Life.

On his return to England he became an Esquire of the King's Bedchamber, and spent the next ten years at Edward's court, then one of the most brilliant in Europe. The court of Edward still had all the atmosphere of a French court, and Chaucer, although he decided to use his native tongue, became practically a French love-poet writing in the English language. Aside from the use of the eight-syllable line, rhyming in couplets, the conventions of the French school which are most evident in Chaucer's work are those which belong to the system of courtly love, and those structural principles observable in the love-visions which preceded and were contemporary with Chaucer.

Chaucer's French Period.

The conventions of the system of courtly love, indeed, permeate nearly all mediæval non-religious literature. The lover, compelled to be a faithful "servant" of his lady and of Dan Cupid, must languish in amorous pallor, toss sleepless on his couch, swoon, boast of his lady's beauty and wit, compose ballads in her honor, and fight for the glorification of her token. The lady must be cold as ice, must impose on her lover incredible trials of his courage and fidelity. After many years of hopeless service the lover may be accepted, not because of any merit of himself or of his deeds, but purely because of the lady's boundless compassion. These are the rules of conduct governing the actors in the love-visions—poems in which the lover, exhausted by the play of his emotions, falls asleep at dawn to the music of birds and the melody of brooks, amidst flowers and perfumes, and dreams of knights wooing their ladies. The most famous work of this French school was the *Roman de la Rose*, an elaborate allegory, placed in a dream-setting, of Love, the rose, growing in a mystic garden, warded by symbolic powers from the lover's approach, and provoking endless disquisitions, serious or satirical, such as the later Middle Ages loved to spend upon the subtleties of sentiment. Chaucer manifested his enthusiasm for this work by translating it into English verse. Less than two thousand lines of his translation have survived; indeed, the whole may never have been completed. But the *Roman de la Rose* and other poems of its school left a profound impression upon Chaucer's work, and for years he thought and wrote in the atmosphere which they created for him. During these years of French influence he wrote, for the knights and ladies of King Edward's court, those "ballades, roundels, virelays," by which his fellow-poet Gower says "the land fulfilled was over all." The most important work which remains to us from his purely French period, however, is the *Boke of the Duchesse*, written in

1369 to solace John of Gaunt, the King's third son, for the death of his wife, Blaunche. In this work Chaucer has transformed the conventions of love-vision and of courtly love into a sincere and moving personal elegy.

Chaucer's Later Life.

Between 1370 and 1385 Chaucer made several journeys on official business to Flanders, to France, and to Italy. Although these journeys are not marks of special favor—many of the other esquires of the household made similar journeys, and either Chaucer's missions were of small importance or he was merely a subordinate in the train of some person of high degree—yet the opportunities afforded by wide travel for converse with many types of men, for observation of widely varying manners, and especially for becoming familiar with Italian literature, were of the utmost importance in his poetic education. During the remainder of his life, Chaucer—like many others of the King's esquires—held various official positions, some of which were probably in the nature of political sinecures, for much of the time his work was performed by deputies. For twelve years he was controller of the customs on wool, leather, and skins at the port of London. For a while he was simultaneously controller of the petty customs at the same port. In 1386 he represented the County of Kent as "Knight of the Shire." In 1389 he was appointed clerk of the King's works at Westminster, the Tower, Windsor Castle, and other places. Most of the time during the last thirty years of his life we find him also drawing a pension from the national treasury, as well as the money equivalent of a daily pitcher of wine from the King's cellars. For several years he and his wife (whom he had married about 1366) also received pensions from John of Gaunt. Chaucer died in 1400.

The one event in Chaucer's life which probably produced the profoundest effect on his literary career was his first visit to Italy, in 1372. Italy was then at the

zenith of her artistic energy, in the full splendor of that illumination which had followed the intellectual twilight of the Middle Ages, and which we know as the Renaissance, or "New Birth." Each of her little city-states was a centre of marvellous activity, and everywhere were being produced those masterpieces of painting, sculpture, and architecture which still make Italy a place of pilgrimage for all lovers of art. The literary activity was equally great, at least in Tuscany. Dante had been dead for half a century, but his poetry was just beginning to be widely recognized as one of the world-forces in the realm of imagination. Petrarch, the grave, accomplished scholar and elegant poet, was passing his closing years at his villa of Arqua, near Padua; Boccaccio, poet, tale-writer, pedant, and worldling, was spending the autumn of his life among the cypress and laurel slopes of Fiesole, above Florence. The world which lay open to Chaucer's gaze when he crossed the Alps was, therefore, one calculated to fascinate and stimulate him in the highest degree.

The Renaissance.

From Chaucer's poems we get only an occasional glimpse of his life. One of these reveals his eagerness for study, which, after the day's work was done, would send him home, regardless of rest and "newe thinges," to sit "as domb as any stone" over his book, until his eyes were dazed. The unquenchable curiosity of the men of the Renaissance was his, more than a century before the Renaissance really began to affect England. His, too, was their thirst for expression. The great books he had come to know in Italy gave him no peace until he should equal or surpass them. Among the works which he produced, very largely in emulation of the Italian masters, were the *House of Fame*, the *Parlement of Foules* (Birds), *Troilus and Creseide*, and the *Legend of Goode Wommen*, the last of which was dedicated to the young Queen,

Chaucer and the Renaissance.

Anne of Bohemia, whom Richard II had married in 1382.

Both the *House of Fame* and the *Parlement of Foules* are colored with Italian reminiscence; but the chief fruit of Chaucer's Italian journeys—aside from his increased power as a literary artist, due to his emulation of the Italian poets—was the long poem adapted from Boccaccio's *Philostrato* (The Love-Stricken One), entitled by Chaucer *Troilus and Creseide*. The story of the love of the young Trojan hero for Cressida, and of her desertion of him for the Greek Diomedes, had been elaborated during the Middle Ages until it finally was retold by Boccaccio, who gave it an animated but ornate treatment in facile verse. Chaucer, though pretending only to translate, radically changed the structure and emphasis of the story. Instead of an almost unmotivated recital of a mere intrigue, Chaucer has written a genuine psychological novel, analyzing minutely the action and reaction of character and situation upon the leading persons. In his hands the lovers' go-between, Pandarus, is transformed from a gilded youth of Troilus's own age and temperament to a middle-aged man, plausible, good-natured, full of easy worldly wisdom and materialistic ideas—a character as true to type and as vitally alive as if Shakespeare had drawn him. The growth of the love-passion in Cressida's heart is traced through its gradual stages with a subtlety entirely new in English poetry. The action, dialogue, and "stage-setting" of the poem are all created with the magic realism of a master of narrative art. Though the scene is ancient Troy, though the manners and customs are those of mediæval knights and ladies, though the texture of the whole is stiffly brocaded with the conventions of courtly love, we seem, in many passages, to be looking at a modern play or reading from a modern novel, so intimate and actual does it appear.

"Troilus and Creseide."

The *Legend of Goode Wommen* is chiefly interesting because of its prologue. In the body of the poem Cleopatra, Dido, Thisbe, and other famous women are celebrated for their steadfastness in love, possibly as a covert tribute to the wifely virtues of the young Queen. These stories are adapted from a Latin work of Boccaccio, *De Claris Mulieribus*. But the long prologue, original with Chaucer, is the most winning of his many passages of personal confession and self-revelation.

"Legend of Goode Wommen."

He represents himself as wandering in the fields on May-day, the only season which can tempt him from his books. The birds are singing to their mates their song of "blessed be Seynt Valentyn!" and Zephyrus and Flora, as "god and goddesse of the flowry mede," have spread the earth with fragrant blossoms. But the poet has eyes only for one flower, the daisy, the "emperice (empress) and flour of floures alle." All day long he leans and pores upon the flower; and when at last it has folded its leaves at the coming of night he goes home to rest, with the thought of rising early to gaze upon it once more. He makes his couch out of doors, in a little arbor, "for deyntee of the newe someres sake," and here he has a wonderful dream. He dreams that he is again in the fields, kneeling by the daisy, and sees approaching a procession of bright forms. First comes the young god of love, clad in silk embroidered with red rose-leaves and sprays of green, his "gilt hair" crowned with light, in his hand two fiery darts, and his wings spread angel-like. He leads by the hand a queen, clad in green and crowned with a fillet of daisies under a band of gold. She is Alcestis, type of noblest wifely devotion. Behind her comes an endless train of women who have been "trewe of love." They kneel in a circle about the poet, and sing with one voice honor to woman's faithfulness, and to the daisy flower, the emblem of Alcestis. The love-god then

glowers angrily upon Chaucer, and upbraids him for having done despite to women, in translating the *Roman de la Rose*, with its satire upon their foibles; and in writing the story of Cressida, so dishonorable to the steadfastness of the sex. Alcestis comes to his rescue, and agrees to pardon his misdeeds if he will spend the rest of his life in making a "glorious Legend of Goode Wommen," and will send it, on her behalf, to the English queen. Chaucer promises solemnly, and as soon as he wakes betakes himself to his task.

In the *House of Fame*, where he sets out in search of "Love's Tidings," as well as in the *Legend of Goode Wommen*, Chaucer had apparently entered upon the task of constructing a work which would constitute a setting for a group of tales; but after starting, he left both these attempts unfinished. Yet the ambition to crown his life with some monumental work remained. The drift of his genius, as he grew older, was more and more toward the dramatic perception of real life. He had a wide experience of men of all ranks and conditions, and he had been storing up for years, with his keenly observant, quiet eyes, the materials for a literary presentation of contemporary society upon a great scale. Moreover, while Chaucer was growing up, England had been growing conscious of herself. The struggle with France had unified the people at last into a homogeneous body, no longer Norman and Saxon, but English; and the brilliancy of Edward III's early reign had given to this new people their first intoxicating draft of national pride. The growing power of Parliament tended to foster the feeling of solidarity and self-consciousness in the nation. As a member of Parliament, as a government officer, as an intimate member of the court, Chaucer felt these influences to the full. It must have seemed more and more important to him that the crowning work of his life

Influence of the New National Life on Chaucer.

should in some way represent the varied thought and the varied external spectacle of the actual society in which he moved.

Plan of the "Canterbury Tales."

With the happy fortune of genius he hit, in his *Canterbury Tales*, upon a scheme wonderfully adapted to the ends he had in view. Collections of stories, both secular and sacred, articulated into a general framework, had been numerous and popular in the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance inherited the taste for them, while enlarging their scope, and humanizing their content. Boccaccio had furnished one example of throwing a graceful trellis-work of incident and dialogue about the separate stories of a collection. In his *Decameron* a company of aristocratic young people are represented as having taken refuge from the plague raging in Florence, in a villa on the slopes of Fiesole. They wander through the valleys of oleanders and myrtles, or sit beside the fountains of the villa gardens, and beguile the time with tales of sentiment and intrigue. Another Italian, Sercambi, had pictured a pilgrimage composed of many classes of people, presided over by a leader or governor, and entertained on their journey with tales narrated by an official story-teller, who is Sercambi himself. As in the case of the fragments of the *Canterbury Tales*, the stories are linked together by transition passages, in which the tales are frequently the subject of comment. Chaucer, while adopting a similar framework, made his setting much more national and racy; individualized his characters so as to make of them a gallery of living portraits of his time; varied his tales so as to include almost all the types of narrative known to literature at the close of the Middle Ages; and, most important of all, put his tales into the mouths of the separate pilgrims.

He represents himself as alighting, one spring evening, at the Tabard Inn, in Southwark, a suburb at the south-

ern end of London Bridge, where afterward the famous Elizabethan playhouses, Shakespeare's among them, were to arise. Southwark was the place of departure and arrival for all south-of-England travel, and especially for pilgrimages to the world-renowned shrine of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury. A company bent on such a pilgrimage Chaucer finds gathered in the inn; he makes their acquaintance, and joins himself with them for the journey. Counting the poet, they are thirty in all. There is a Knight lately come from the foreign wars, a man who has fought in Prussia and in Turkey, jousted in Tramisene, and been present at the storming of Alexandria—a high-minded, gentle-mannered, knightly adventurer, type of the courteous, war-loving chivalry which was passing rapidly away. With him is his son, a young Squire, curly-haired and gay, his short, white-sleeved gown embroidered like a mead with red-and-white flowers; he is an epitome of the gifts and graces of brilliant youth. Their servant is a Yeoman, in coat and hood of green, a sheaf of peacock-arrows under his belt, a mighty bow in his hand, and a silver image of Saint Christopher upon his breast; he is the type of that sturdy English yeomanry which with its gray goose shafts humbled the pride of France at Crecy and Agincourt. There is a whole group of ecclesiastical figures, representing in their numbers and variety the diverse activities of the mediæval church. Most of them are satirical portraits, in their worldliness and materialism only too faithfully representative of the ecclesiastical abuses against which Wyclif struggled. First of all there is a Monk, who cares only for hunting and good cheer; his bald head shines like glass, his bright eyes roll in his head; he rides a sleek brown palfrey, and has "many a dainty horse" in his stables; his sleeves are trimmed with fine fur at the wrists, his hood is fastened under his chin with a gold

The Pilgrims at the Tabard.

love-knot. As a companion figure to the hunting Monk, Chaucer gives us "Madame Eglantyne," the Prioress; she is a teacher of young ladies, speaks French "after the school of Stratford-atte-bowe," is exquisite in her table-manners, counterfeiting as well as she can the stately behavior of the court. Other ecclesiastics are there, hangers-on and caterpillars of the church: the Friar, intimate with hospitable franklins, innkeepers, and worthy women, and despising beggars and lazars; the Summoner, a repulsive person with "fire-red cherubim face"; the Pardoner, with his bag full of pardons "come from Rome all hot," and of bits of cloth and pig's bones which he sells as relics of the holy saints. Chaucer's treatment of these evil churchmen is highly good-natured and tolerant; he never takes the tone of moral indignation against them. But he does better; he sets beside them, as the type of true shepherds of the church, a "poor Parson," such as, partly under Wyclif's influence, had spread over England, beginning that great movement for the purification of the church which was to result, more than a century later, in the Reformation. Chaucer paints the character of the Parson, poor in this world's goods, but "rich of holy thought and work," with loving and reverent touch. The Parson's brother travels with him—a Plowman, a "true swinker and a good," who helps his poor neighbors without hire and loves them as himself; he reminds us of Piers the Plowman, in the wonderful Vision which is the antitype of Chaucer's work. A crowd of other figures fill the canvas. There is a Shipman from the west-country, a representative of those adventurous seamen, half merchant-sailors, half smugglers and pirates, who had already made England's name a terror on the seas and paved the way for her future naval and commercial supremacy. There is a poor Clerk of Oxford, riding a horse as lean as a rake, and dressed in threadbare cloak, who spends all that he can

beg or borrow upon his studies; he represents that passion for learning which was already astir everywhere in Europe, and which was awaiting only the magic touch of the new-found classical literature to blossom out into genuine thought and imagination. There is a Merchant, in a Flemish beaver hat, on a high horse, concealing, with the grave importance of his air, the fact that he is in debt. There is a group of guild-members, in the livery of their guild, all worthy to be aldermen; together with the merchant, they represent the mercantile and manufacturing activity which was lifting England rapidly to the rank of a great commercial power. There is the Wife of Bath, almost a modern feminist figure, conceived with masterly humor and realism, a permanent human type; she has had "husbands five at church-door," and though "somdel deaf," hopes to live to wed several others; she rides on an ambler, with spurs and scarlet hose on her feet, and on her head a hat as broad as a buckler. These and a dozen others are all painted in vivid colors, and with a psychological truth which remind us of the portraits of the Flemish painter, Van Eyck, Chaucer's contemporary. Taken as a whole they represent the entire range of English society in the fourteenth century, with the exception of the highest aristocracy and the lowest order of villeins or serfs.

At supper this goodly company hears from the host of the Tabard a proposition that on their journey to Canterbury, to beguile the tedium of the ride, each of them shall tell two tales, and on the homeward journey two more.[1] He agrees to travel with them, to act as master of ceremonies, and on their return to render judgment as to

The Pilgrims on the Road.

[1] Counting the Host and the Canon's Yeoman (who joins them on the road) the company consisted of thirty-two persons, making a total of a hundred and twenty-eight tales to be told. Less than a fifth of this number were actually written, and several of these were left fragmentary.

who has told the best story, the winner to be given a supper at the general expense. So it is agreed. The next morning they set out bright and early on their journey southward to the cathedral city. They draw lots to determine who shall tell the first tale. The lot falls to the Knight, who tells the charming chivalric story of Palamon and Arcite. When it is finished the Host calls upon the Monk to follow. But the Miller, who is already drunk and quarrelsome, insists on being heard, and launches forthwith into a very unedifying tale about a carpenter. The Reeve, who had followed that trade in his youth, is so angry that he retaliates with a story of an unsavory intrigue in which a miller is badly worsted. The Host rises in his stirrups and calls on the Parson for a story, "by Goddes dignitee!" The Parson reproves him for swearing; whereupon the Host cries that he "smells a Lollard[1] in the wind," and bids them prepare for a sermon. This is too much for the Shipman, who breaks in impatiently. When the Host calls upon the Prioress, he changes his bluff manner to correspond with her rank and excessive refinement, speaking with polite circumlocution, "as courteously as it had been a maid." The Prioress responds graciously, and tells the story of a little "clergeon," or schoolboy, who, after his throat has been cut by the wicked Jews, and his body thrown into a pit, still sings with clear young voice his *Alma Redemptoris* to the glory of the Virgin. Overwhelmed with emotion, the company is riding silently along, when the Host, to break the awe-struck mood, turns to Chaucer, and begins to joke him upon his corpulency:

> "What man artow?" quod he;
> "Thou lookest as thou wouldest find an hare,
> For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.
> Approache near, and look up merrily.

[1] The followers of Wyclif were called Lollards.

Now ware you, sirs, and let this man have place;
He seemeth elvish by his countenance
For unto no wight doeth he dalliance."

Chaucer, thus rallied, begins a travesty of those doggerel rhymes of knightly adventure to which many of the romances of chivalry had in his day degenerated. The *Rhyme of Sir Thopas* is a capital burlesque of a style of poetry which Chaucer himself had come to supplant. He has not got far before the Host cries out upon the "drasty rhyming," and Chaucer meekly agrees to contribute instead "a little thing in prose," a "moral tale"; and he proceeds with the long story of Melibeus and his wife Prudence, a very tedious story indeed from the modern point of view. The Squire's tale, as befits his years and disposition, is a highly colored Oriental tale of love, adventure, and magic, in which figure a flying horse of brass and other wonders. The Pardoner, called on for "some merry tale or jape," but restricted by the gentles to "some moral thing," preaches one of the sermons that he knows by rote—a startlingly vivid and vigorous short story about three "rioters" who go in search of Death, and who find him in a pile of gold.

So the stories continue, the transition passages constantly picturing the vivid dialogue and action of the pilgrims, at times one theme being carried through several tales in succession. The Wife of Bath, after a long prologue in which she describes the vigorous measures by which she has ruled her five husbands, tells a tale the point of which is that marital happiness results only if sovereignty in marriage is vested in the wife. After the Friar and the Summoner have told vulgar stories about each other, the Clerk of Oxford resumes the theme introduced by the Wife, with the story of the infinite, nay, incredible patience of Griselda under the tests imposed by her husband Walter—a tale borrowed from the Latin

of Petrarch, who had translated it from Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Finally, the Franklin tells a tale of *gentilesse*, in which the husband and the wife, exhibiting mutual forbearance and courtesy, appear to solve the problem most satisfactorily of all.

Chaucer's Poetic Art.

In the sixteenth century and later, when owing to the change in the pronunciation of words (especially the loss of a final "e" from thousands of words and grammatical forms), the secret of Chaucer's versification was lost, he was regarded as a barbarous writer, ignorant of prosody, and with no ear for the melody of verse. The exact contrary of this was really the case. He was an artist in verse-effects, who not only wrote with a metrical accuracy, fluency, and variety that has rarely been surpassed, but who also paid constant and delicate heed to the niceties of rhythm and tone-color. In a half-humorous address to his scrivener Adam, he calls down curses upon that unworthy servant for spoiling good verses by bad copying, and in *Troilus* he beseeches his readers not to "mismetre" his book. From his very earliest poems his work is in all formal details faultless; and as he progressed in skill his music became constantly more varied and flexible. His early manner reaches its height in the exquisite rondel, intricate in form but handled with great simplicity of effect, which brings the *Parlement of Foules* to a melodious close. A good example of his later music may be found in the description of the Temple of Venus in the "Knight's Tale"; or, as a study in a graver key, in the ballad "Flee fro the Press," which marks so impressively the deepening seriousness of Chaucer's mind in his last years.

Chaucer employed three principal metres: the eight-syllable line, rhyming in couplets, as in the *Boke of the Duchesse;* the ten-syllable line, also rhyming in couplets, as in the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales;* and the same

line arranged in seven-line stanzas (known later as "rhyme royal"), as in *Troilus*. The heroic couplet he introduced into English verse; the rhyme royal he invented. In his shorter poems he made, however, endless metrical experiments, and showed a mastery of intricate verse-forms, remarkable even in an age when the French had made verse-writing a matter of almost gymnastic skill.

Sources of His Material.

As for his material, Chaucer did not hesitate to take what suited him, wherever he found it; sometimes borrowing wholesale without change, oftener adapting and reworking his matter freely. Any such thing as "originality," in the modern sense, was undreamed of in the Middle Ages; the material of literature was common property, and the same stories were endlessly repeated. Whoever would learn the "sources" from which Chaucer drew must ransack the storehouse of mediæval fiction, and examine no little of mediæval science and philosophy. Chaucer's was the only originality then possible—he improved whatever he borrowed, and stamped it with his individuality of thought and style and structural skill. That part of his work which we value most, however, such as the prologues to the *Legend of Goode Wommen* and to the *Canterbury Tales*, was original in every sense; and some of the *Tales* have been so radically and vitally remodelled that they stand as genuinely original.

II

Chaucer and Gower.

Chaucer lived and wrote in a world where the half-shadows of the Middle Ages were only beginning to scatter before the clear dawn-light of modern culture. He, first of all men in England, reacted to that stimulating and emancipating movement called the Renaissance, as it seethed in the souls of men beyond the Alps; and his artistic conscious-

ness was stirred out of the rigid bonds, the cramping conventionalities, the narrow inhibitions of the Middle Ages. From them he emerged into the world of living actualities that he exhibits in his powerful later work. In this he was far beyond his age. The full force of his originality is most evident when he is compared with John Gower—the "moral Gower" to whom he dedicated his *Troilus*. Chaucer, in his mature work, looks forward to the England of the Tudors; Gower is still tramping in the treadmill of mediæval abstraction and prisoned thought.

John Gower.

John Gower (1325–1408) was an aristocratic, conservative landed gentleman, with rich manors in Kent and elsewhere. He was known at court, where his poetry met with much appreciation. He was extremely pious; in his old age he resided in lodgings inside the priory of St. Mary Overy (now St. Saviour's) in Southwark, not far from the Tabard Inn which Chaucer had made famous. Here he spent his last days in devout observances; and here his sculptured figure can still be seen on his tomb, his head, crowned with roses, pillowed upon his three chief volumes. Each of these was written in a different tongue: the *Speculum Meditantis* in French, the *Vox Clamantis* in Latin, and the *Confessio Amantis* in English. This diversity in the choice of language shows clearly the opinion of the age—that the English tongue was not, as yet, obviously the one instrument of literary expression.

The "Speculum Meditantis."

The *Speculum Meditantis*, or *Mirour de l'Omme*, consists of an elaborate allegory of the attacks of the seven deadly sins and their offspring upon mankind; a complete review of the state of the world and of its corruptions, in which are vividly pictured the wickedness of London, its dram-shops, its cheating merchants and shopkeepers, its slothful monks and friars, its vulture-like lawyers, and its lazy and rebellious laborers; finally, there is presented

a plan of salvation, consisting of the intervention of the Virgin Mary, whose history is narrated, together with the whole story of the gospel narrative. The work as a whole is systematically conceived and executed. The tone is one of moral earnestness, and the vignettes of contemporary life are painted with color and vigor.

The *Confessio Amantis*, like the *Canterbury Tales*, is a collection of stories. A lover makes confession to a priest of Venus, a learned old man named Genius, and the stories are narrated by this priest for the purpose of imparting moral instruction. Though the design is occasionally marred by digressions, in general the structure of the poem is carefully planned and executed: each of the seven deadly sins, with five branches, is shown to be applicable to love and lovers, and one or more stories are told to illustrate and reprove each of the sins, although the application of some of the tales is rather forced.

The "Confessio Amantis."

The *Vox Clamantis* is interesting for historical reasons. The second half of the fourteenth century was a time of revolutionary changes among the peasants of England. Four terrible attacks of the Black Death, the first in 1348, the last in 1375, swept over the country, destroying over a third of the population. For a long time the old feudal system known as "villeinage," according to which all agriculture was carried on for the lord of the manor by serfs bound to the land, had been in process of decay, giving way to a combination of renting to free farmers (like Chaucer's Plowman), and of hiring landless laborers, who wandered from district to district, wherever attracted by high wages. The destruction of such a huge number of laborers by the plague resulted in an enormous decrease in the production of food, and, as a result of the dislocation of the labor market due to the demand for workers, villeinage practically disappeared. The condition of

The "Vox Clamantis."

the survivors, however, was not very greatly improved, for the short crops, the long periods of idleness between harvest and plowing, and especially the statutes, passed by Parliament, attempting to reduce wages to the scale prevailing before the plague, produced wide-spread hunger and discontent. The exactions of the church, the extravagances of Edward III, and the heavy cost of his foreign wars, added to the burden borne by the distracted peasantry. The fearlessness with which the Oxford reformer, John Wyclif, attacked the corruptions of the clergy, and questioned the fundamental rights of property, was like flame to the fuel of discontent. In 1381 a nation-wide uprising of the peasants occurred, under the leadership of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and a socialist priest of Kent, named John Balle. They marched on London, sacked the Tower and the Savoy palace, and murdered an archbishop; it seemed as if the throne and the whole social order were about to be overturned. It was this state of things which prompted Gower to write his *Vox Clamantis*. As a landowner in Kent, he felt the full brunt of the disturbance. He writes from the aristocratic point of view, representing the common people as beasts, oxen, dogs, flies, and frogs, because of the evil magic of the time. The poem is full of horror and dismay at the social volcano which had opened for a moment, threatening to engulf the nation.

John Wyclif.

John Wyclif (1320?–1384), the man who by his teaching had helped, though unintentionally, to foment the peasant rebellion, was primarily a theologian and religious reformer. His connection with English literature is, in a sense, accidental, but it is nevertheless very important. He attacked the temporal power of the church, advocating, partly in the interests of the overburdened poor, the appropriation by the state of all church property, especially of land. While waging a war of theory on this and other ecclesiastical questions,

he planned and carried out a great practical movement, known as the Lollard movement, for arousing the common people to a more vital religious life. He sent out simple, devoted men to preach the gospel in the native tongue, and to bring home to their hearers the living truths of religion which the formalism of the mediæval church had obscured. These "poor priests," dressed in coarse russet robes and carrying staves, travelled through the length and breadth of the land, as Wesley's preachers travelled four centuries later, calling men back to the simple faith of early apostolic times.

Wyclif and his Lollard priests began the great Protestant appeal from the dogmas of the church to the Bible which culminated, in the sixteenth century, in Luther and the Reformation. In order to make this appeal effective with the masses, Wyclif not only wrote numerous tracts and sermons in homely, vigorous speech for the common people, but also undertook to translate the whole of the Bible into English. With the assistance of Nicholas of Hereford he completed his great task before his death in 1384. Wyclif's Bible was revised and rendered into more idiomatic language a few years later by John Purvey, and received its final form some time before the end of the century. It is one of the first great prose monuments in English, and its wide popularity, in spite of the occasional stiff and unidiomatic "translation-English," rendered it influential in gaining for the vernacular a position of dignity and honor.

Wyclif's Bible.

The peasant rebellion and the Lollard agitation give us glimpses of an England which Chaucer, in spite of the many-sidedness of his work, did not reveal. The *Canterbury Tales* contain few references to the plague, only one to the peasant uprising, and only one to Lollardry, and these references are casual or jesting. Chaucer wrote for the court and cul-

Chaucer and Langland.

tivated classes, to whom the sufferings of the poor were a matter of the utmost indifference. He is often serious, sometimes nobly so; but intense moral indignation and exalted spiritual rapture were foreign to his artistic, gay, tolerant disposition. In his graceful worldliness, his delight in the bright pageantry of life, he shows himself to be an adherent of the nobility, a follower of the Norman-French literary school; the other side of the English nature, its sombre, puritanical, moralizing side, found expression in a group of poems which have until recently been ascribed to one author (William Langland), and which have been called the *Vision Concerning Piers the Plowman*. Although the question of the unity or diversity of authorship of these poems is still involved in controversy, the position of the adherents of the older view has been so seriously undermined that we are now obliged at least to discard completely the inferential biography of the author, which had been based solely on half-hints and imaginative details contained in the poems. The three poems comprise an original version and two successive revisions, the two latter being about three times as long as the former. It is profitable to consider the earliest version (1362) first.

"Piers the Plowman."

The poem is thrown into the dream or vision form made fashionable by the *Roman de la Rose*. On a May morning, "weary forwandered," the poet leans beside a brook, and, lulled by the soft music of the waters, falls asleep. In a dream he sees a high Tower in the east, a dark Dungeon in a deep dale in the west, and in between a fair Field full of folk, working and wandering. Here are plowmen and wasters, proud ladies and gentlemen of fashion, hermits, peddlers, minstrels, lazy beggars, lying pilgrims, preaching friars, a fraudulent pardoner, absentee priests, unscrupulous lawyers, barons, townspeople, and serfs; some are good, some are wicked, most are greedy, lazy, rapa-

cious. Suddenly a lovely Lady, Holy Church, descends from the mountain, and explains to the dreamer that the Tower is the abode of God the Father, who is the spirit of Truth. Truth, she says, consists in loving God and being charitable to men. From the Tower the dreamer turns to the Dungeon, from which streams a retinue of rascals in the train of Falsehood, the son of Wrong, who is the lord of evil. Falsehood is about to marry Lady Meed, the allegorical representative of the greed of the people in the Field, but Theology forbids the marriage, and in order to obtain leave Meed and Falsehood are required to go to the King's court. On their way the King orders the arrest of the mob of rascals, who disperse in a panic, and Lady Meed alone is brought to trial. Here she attempts to marry the King's greatest Knight, who is named Conscience, but the latter refuses until she obtains the consent of Reason. Before Reason can render judgment, Meed is caught red-handed in the act of bribing the King's officials to release a criminal, and in a stinging speech of denunciation by Reason is forever debarred from pleading before the King. Reason concludes with the assertion that the royal domain can be made righteous and happy only if he and Conscience rule over it. Immediately the dreamer sees Conscience and Repentance preaching to the Field full of folk, who, in the form of personified Deadly Sins, confess, repent, and promise to seek for Truth. But no one knows the way thither, not even a Palmer who has visited every shrine on earth, till Piers, the old, faithful Plowman, ventures to tell them how to find and follow the path. It leads through Meekness, Conscience, love of God and man, and the Ten Commandments (represented as almost impassable rivers, mountains, and forests), after which will be seen the Tower of Truth, surrounded by a moat of Mercy, and guarded by Grace. Entrance can be secured only through the Seven Virtues—the antitheses of the

Deadly Sins. The pilgrims despair over the difficulties, and beg Piers to lead them, but he refuses until he has finished his plowing, sowing, and harvesting, and in the meantime commands them all to assist him. Many refuse to work, and Piers calls in Hunger, who beats them and feeds them only on beans, barley-bread, and water. At the harvest some become arrogant, and refuse to work save for high wages, in spite of the renewed warnings of Hunger. Finally, Truth sends Piers a pardon, under the terms of which only those who aid him are to be admitted to the Tower. The pardon reads, "Those who do good shall enter eternal life, but those who do evil shall suffer in eternal fire." In a dispute over the meaning of the pardon, Piers and a priest jangle so loudly that the dreamer awakes.

Later Versions.

Even to the shortest form of the poem as just given, several cantos were added, which, however, in vigor and structural power, fall far below the work of the first writer. Twice afterward (1377, 1386–1398) the poem was augmented by many more cantos, and was extensively remodelled. A definitely planned allegory, with the systematic action of its living and moving figures, however, was beyond the power of the later writers. Nor did they see or understand the social abuses so clearly, nor could they propose so definite a remedy. Their work is full of poetic lines and of powerful short passages, but it lacks form and structure.

Spirit of the Poem.

The name of Piers the Plowman was used as a rallying cry in the peasant uprising. The poet's sense of equality of all men before God, his hatred of social falsities and hypocrisies, his belief in the dignity of labor, give almost a modern tone to his poem, in spite of its archaic metrical form, and its mediæval allegorical machinery. His deep religious sense and the power of his feeling of social duty are neither ancient nor modern, but of all time.

The metrical form which this poet chose again contrasts him sharply with Chaucer. Chaucer threw in his lot from the first with the new versification imported from France, depending upon regular accent, a fixed number of syllables, and rhyme; and he developed this in such a way as to produce with it a rich and finished music. By his choice of the French system he puts himself in line with the future of English verse, even though the tradition he began was lost for a time in the fifteenth century. The author of *Piers the Plowman*, either because he knew that his popular audience would be more deeply moved by the ancient and traditional rhythms of the nation, or because these were more natural to himself, adopted the old system of native versification which depended upon a fixed number of accents (four) and alliteration for its metrical structure, and allowed great irregularity both in the position of stressed syllables and in the number of syllables in the line. The opening verses of the poem will serve as a specimen:

Its Metrical Form.

> In a sómer séason . whan sóft was the sónne,
> I shópe me in shróudes . as I a shépe were
> In hábit as an hérmit . unhóly of workes;
> Went wíde in this wórlde . wóndres to here.[1]

This metre is, to a modern ear, somewhat monotonous and uncouth. It adapts itself much better to recitation than to reading with the eye. However we account for it, the fact that the *Vision* is written in this antique and rapidly dying verse form, has told against it. From Chaucer, from France and Italy, flows the whole stream of later verse.

Its Poetic Quality.

[1] The cæsura, or heavy pause in the middle of each line, is marked by a dot. The alliterative syllables, of which there are usually two in the first half, and one in the second half, are stressed. There are normally four stresses in the line.

Piers the Plowman has had no modern literary offspring, even though it was imitated a number of times in its own and the following century.

But the work of the poet who wrote the earliest version has suffered most in modern criticism, because it has not been carefully distinguished from that of the later continuators and adapters. Their work is confused in plan, bewildered with detail, full of breaks and structureless transitions. Its total effect is majestic only because of the force of imagination behind it, but it is not artistic. It lacks the clear, firm outline, and the harmonious proportion, which the first poet attained, and which likewise Chaucer's supreme artistic sense enabled him to attain in his later years.

That Chaucer was far in advance of his time becomes clear when we note how persistently his fifteenth century successors turned back to him for inspiration, as to their

Imitators of Chaucer and Gower.

"Fader dere and maister reverent,"

and found themselves unable to do more than awkwardly or pallidly imitate him. The chief among these imitators was John Lydgate, a monk of Bury St. Edmunds, who began making verses before Chaucer's death, and died before the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses. His *Story of Thebes*, based on Boccaccio and Statius, pretends to be told as one of the *Canterbury Tales;* the poet in his prologue feigns to have joined the pilgrims at Canterbury, and at the Host's request tells the story on the homeward journey. The device illustrates clearly the lack of originality of Lydgate and his brother poets. Lydgate's verse, moreover, is markedly halting and tuneless. In this respect Thomas Occleve or Hoccleve (1370?–1450?) was a better disciple. He perhaps had the benefit of Chaucer's personal acquaintance and instruction, loved and mourned him deeply, and preserved, in the manuscript of his *Gov-*

ernail of Princes (written for the Prince of Wales, afterward Henry V), the well-known portrait of Chaucer as a gray-haired old man, hooded and gowned.

A third poet who continued the master's tradition (with a good sprinkling of Gower, to be sure) has lived in literary history as much by the picturesqueness of his personal story as by his poetry, which is nevertheless charming in its kind. This is the young Stuart prince, afterward James I of Scotland, who was captured by English sailors in 1405, and spent the next nineteen years in England, as a prisoner, in the Tower of London, Windsor Castle, and other strongholds. At the time of his capture he was a child of eleven. As he grew up in solitude he turned for diversion to poetry and music—arts in which the Scottish kings were traditionally proficient. One day, from the windows of Windsor Castle, he saw a beautiful young girl walking in the garden below, as Palamon saw the fair Emilie in the "Knight's Tale." The story of his love for Jane Beaufort and its happy outcome the young prince told with tenderness and fancy in his *King's Quair*. It is written in the seven-line pentameter stanza[1] invented by Chaucer and repeatedly used by him, though, in deference to the princely poet, it has since been known as "rhyme royal." Both the style and plan of the *King's Quair* are imitated from the artificial French poetry from which Chaucer more and more departed as he grew in original power, but from which neither Gower nor the Chaucerian imitators delivered themselves. It is significant of the failure of these imitators to perceive the immense originality of Chaucer's later work, that they frequently put Gower on a level with him. In the Envoy of the *King's Quair* James recommends his "litel boke, nakit of eloquence,"

James I of Scotland and "The King's Quair."

[1] Rhyming *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *b*, *c*, *c*.

> Unto the ympnes (hymns) of my maisters dere,
> Gowere and Chaucere, that on steppis satt
> Of rhetorike whil they were lyvand here,
> Superlative as poets laureate,

and he brings the poem to a close with a prayer that their souls may together enjoy the bliss of heaven. When in 1424 the prince, on the eve of release from his long captivity, was married to the lady whom he had celebrated in the *King's Quair*, his reverence for Gower prompted him to have the wedding held in the church of St. Saviour's, where the old poet lay buried.

Fifteenth-Century Poetry.

The fifteenth century is often characterized as a period barren of poetic production. This is true only so far as it implies the absence of genius. Quantitatively the fifteenth century was more prolific of English poetry (and prose) than any preceding century. The enormous growth of English commerce and industry, and the consequent rise of the middle classes in number, wealth, and leisure, resulted in a voracious public appetite for the output of literary mediocrity, a large part of which is purely utilitarian. The number of third-rate writers is very large —the works of over three hundred have been printed— and the quantity of their output is surprising. But the fact remains that the freshest and most spontaneous work is of popular origin. Songs and carols, ballads, and new and remodelled plays of all sorts constitute the finest literature of the century.

The English popular ballad has been defined as "a narrative poem without any known author or any marks of individual authorship, such as sentiment and reflection, meant in the first instance for singing, and connected, as its name implies, with the communal dance, but submitted to a process of oral tradition among people free from literary influences and fairly homogeneous." These

ballads appear to have flourished luxuriantly among the folk in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, after which their composition ceased. Over three hundred of them, in 1,300 versions, have survived, and have been collected and printed, the earliest collection being that in Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Popular Poetry*, the publication of which in 1765 aroused the keenest interest. These ballads in the main are of two different types, one presenting an emotional situation, often tragic, in short stanzas, with a refrain and with much repetition; the other, as in the case of the Robin Hood ballads, offering a rather extended narrative in stanzas of four lines, the second and fourth lines rhyming. The former may be illustrated by the following:

Lully, lulley, lully, lulley,
The fawcon hath born my make[1] away.

He bare hym up, he bare hym down,
He bare hym into an orchard browne. (*Refrain.*)

In that orchard there was an halle,
That was hangid with purpill and pall. (*Ref.*)

And in that hall there was a bede;
Hit was hangid with gold so rede. (*Ref.*)

And yn that bed there lythe a knyght,
His wowndis bledyng day and nyght. (*Ref.*)

By that bede side kneleth a may,[2]
And she wepeth both nyght and day. (*Ref.*)

One of the best known of the Robin Hood ballads, that entitled *Robin Hood and the Monk*, opens with the following musical and picturesque stanzas:

In somer, when the shawes[3] be sheyne,[4]
And leves be large and long,

[1] Mat [2] Maid. [3] Groves. [4] Beautiful.

Hit is full mery[1] in feyre foreste
To here the foulys[2] song.
To se the dere drawe to the dale,
And leve the hilles hee,[3]
And shadow hem in the leves grene,
Under the grenewood tre.

The ballad has a well-constructed plot, with fighting, imprisonment, disguise, and escape.

Fifteenth-Century Prose.

In prose the fifteenth century produced one work which has much of the elevation and imaginative splendor of great poetry, the *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory. Malory was a knight, a gentleman of an ancient house, with its seat at Newbold Revell, Warwickshire. As a young man he served in France, in the military retinue of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, a warrior in whom lived again the knightly ideal of a former age, and who was known by the romantic title of "Father of Courtesy." Such a lineage and training fitted Malory peculiarly for his task of combining in one great prose mosaic almost all the legends and tales of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table, which had been richly elaborated by the poets and prose-writers of England and France. Here, in an enchanted realm, detached from actuality, we hear of the high deeds of love, loyalty, and revenge performed by the great personifications of chivalry —Gawain, Lancelot, Percival, and Galahad. Very largely by virtue of his imitating the style of his French originals, Malory became the master of a simple, flowing English, primitive in structure, but capable of considerable flexibility and falling into pleasant natural rhythms. Almost the only English example which he might have had was in the famous *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, a clever and long-accepted literary forgery, really compiled from numerous accounts of travels; it was originally composed in French,

[1] Pleasant. [2] Little birds. [3] High.

and was translated into English late in the fourteenth century. The translator of these fictitious Travels is unknown, but whoever he was, he threw his marvellous tales of giant sheep, human beings with dogs' faces, "anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," into a simple, lucid prose, which, while lacking the terseness and energy of Wyclif's popular sermons, was the best instrument yet found for the journey-work of literature. This instrument Malory took up; but in response to the superior dignity and beauty of his subject, he raised it to a higher power. The *Morte Darthur* was finished by 1470; it was printed in 1485, when Caxton, the first English printer, published it with an interesting preface from his own hand.

CHAPTER IV

THE RENAISSANCE: NON-DRAMATIC LITERATURE TO THE DEATH OF SPENSER

Period of Decline after Chaucer.

THE literary decline following the death of Chaucer was due partly to political causes. The dispute in regard to the throne, which culminated in the Wars of the Roses, distracted the country, wasted its energy, and finally destroyed in large measure the noble families on whose patronage early literature and art were dependent. The accession of Henry VII in 1485 brought about a period of quiet and recovery. As its power increased, the country resumed its position in the family of European nations, and began through them to feel anew the stimulus of the movement called the Renaissance.

The Renaissance.

The Renaissance was in essence an intellectual rebirth. It showed itself in the effort of the individual to free himself from the rigid institutions of the Middle Ages, feudalism and the church; and to assert his right to live, to think, and to express himself as he pleased. As men gained this freedom they felt less inclined to assent to the mediæval view that this life should be sacrificed to the future; they turned more and more to the present world, to the problems of gaining mastery in it through wealth or statecraft, of discovering its secrets through exploration and scientific experiment, of heightening its enjoyments through art and literature.

One force of immense importance in the Renaissance was the new knowledge of the world of antiquity, which was obtained through the recovery of the writings and

works of art of the classical period. The idea presented in the literatures of Athens and Rome, of life which should be lived for its opportunities of individual development and enjoyment, came to have a strong influence on men—an influence denoted by the term *Humanism*, which was applied to the study of the classics. Moreover, the examples of perfection of form given by classical poets, orators, sculptors, and architects, became models on which the new taste for the beautiful formed itself. Naturally, Italy, as a seat of Roman civilization, possessed within herself a great store of the relics of the classical age, and was in the best position to receive more from the East. When the Turks conquered the Eastern Empire and captured Constantinople, in 1453, many Greek scholars betook themselves to Italy with their manuscripts; and in this way Italian cities became centres of Greek study, and of the classical culture or humanism in which the new intellectual impulse was nourished.

The Influence of the Classics.

With all these advantages Italy became the teacher of Europe in philosophy, in art, and in classical scholarship. Other nations, however, supplied elements of the new world which was being created. Spain and Portugal gave the practical energy that sent Columbus to America and Vasco da Gama around Africa. Germany contributed the invention of printing, by which the new civilization was diffused among the people; and Germany also took the lead in the movement which had for its object the emancipation of the conscience from the church. A beginning had been made in this direction by Wyclif; but the great forward step was taken when, in 1517, Luther nailed to the church door in Wittenberg his attack upon the power of the Pope. It is true, this Reformation, as time went on, took the form of a moral reaction against the worldly

Elements in the Renaissance.

spirit of the Renaissance; but in its largest aspect it made not only for the religious liberty of the individual, but also for general freedom of thought.

Early Renaissance in England.

In the early Renaissance we must think of England as lagging somewhat behind the more precocious nations, Italy and France. The English Renaissance can scarcely be said to begin until the reign of Henry VII, and it did not come to its full splendor until the latter days of Elizabeth. Even before the accession of Henry VII, however, we can discern signs of its coming. In 1476 Caxton set up his printing-press in London. Before this date one of the colleges at Oxford had engaged an Italian teacher of Greek, and in the next few years William Grocyn and Thomas Linacre went to Italy to study with the Italian humanists. They returned to give Oxford an international reputation as the home of Greek studies, so that the greatest scholar of the time, the Dutch Erasmus, came there to study, thinking it no longer necessary for young men to resort to Italy.

The Oxford Reformers.

These men of the new learning, especially the younger generation, Erasmus and his friends, John Colet and Thomas More, exemplify in memorable fashion the hopefulness and idealism that attended the early progress of the Renaissance. All three were reformers. Colet, who was afterward Dean of St. Paul's, set a model for the public-school system of England, in his famous St. Paul's School. Erasmus sketched the character of the perfect ruler in his *Institutes of a Christian Prince;* and More that of a perfect society in his *Utopia.* All three were interested in the reform of the church, and though they did not follow Henry VIII in his revolt against the Pope, they prepared the way for the later alliance between the universities and the English Reformation.

Still more important than the universities as a centre

of Renaissance influence was the court. Both Henry VII and Henry VIII ruled in the spirit of modern statecraft. Both encouraged trade and manufactures, and increased the wealth of the country. Both set aside the relics of feudalism by allowing men of low birth to rise to distinction, through personal service rendered to the sovereign. Thus the court became the field for the display of individual ambition. Henry VIII, indeed, in his own character resembled strongly some of the Italian princes of the Renaissance, who mingled the enlightenment of the statesman with the suspicious cruelty of the despot. The men who played for power in his service had need of the utmost address, in a game where the stakes were the highest, and defeat was fatal. The career of his great minister, Cardinal Wolsey, is a vivid illustration of the effect of the Renaissance in England. Of low birth, he rose to be the supreme figure in church and state. In diplomacy he played the game that was taught by the Italian states, his object being to secure for England the position of arbiter in the European balance of power. His policy tended to draw England nearer to the continental nations, and to give her a part in the new civilization. He seconded her sovereign's taste for art, learning, and magnificence. He founded Cardinal's College, now Christ Church, at Oxford, and built Hampton Court Palace, one of the best specimens of Tudor architecture. At his invitation the German painter Hans Holbein came to England and painted for us the faces and characters of the men of Henry's court, as Italian painters were doing of Florentines and Venetians. The whole court took on an aspect of splendor in dress, entertainments, and manners.

The Court of Henry VIII.

The most attractive figure, both among the Oxford reformers and later at the court of Henry, is Sir Thomas More (1478–1535). More separated from his early com-

panions and threw himself into state affairs, becoming Lord Chancellor in succession to Wolsey, and like him falling a victim to the king's change of policy, he was beheaded in 1535. He is remembered, however, for the union of his interests, intellectual and practical, which resulted in *Utopia*, written in Latin in 1516, and translated into English in 1533.

Sir Thomas More.

In this famous book a sailor returning to England holds a conversation with the author concerning the state of the realm, in the course of which it appears that many of the evils of government and wrongs of the people, of which Langland had complained, were still in existence. Then, in the second part, the sailor proceeds to give an account of a land beyond the sea, Utopia (Nowhere), where the people live by reason, and all poverty and injustice have been abolished. This sketch of an imaginary commonwealth owes much to Plato's *Republic*, and in turn became the ancestor of a whole class of fiction, of which Bacon's *New Atlantis* is an early and Mr. H. G. Wells's *Modern Utopia* a recent example.

"Utopia."

More's *Utopia* represents the Renaissance interest in the state as a work of art, and its enthusiastic belief that not only human society but human nature itself is capable of enormous improvement. Many other books of the time picture the individual life as a work of art, and emphasize the resulting gain to society. Such books are manuals of education, of manners, of personal ethics. One of the most important came to England from Italy, *The Courtier* (1528) by Baldassare Castiglione, a book which marks the evolution of the mediæval knight into the modern gentleman. *The Boke named the Governour* (1531), by Sir Thomas Elyot, was written to show how the culture of the individual should serve the state, its subject being the proper education of "the childe of a

"The Boke named the Governour."

gentleman which is to have authority in a publike weale." It is largely concerned with the methods and benefits of study of the classics, but its English quality is seen in the author's enthusiasm for outdoor sports. "Wrastlynge," he naïvely tells us, "is a very good exercise . . . so that it be with one that is equal in strength or somewhat under, and that the place be ſofte so that in fallinge theyr bodies be not bruised." Bowling, however, "is to be utterly abjected of all noble men, in likewise foote balle, wherein is nothinge but beastly furie and extreme violence."

Both More and Elyot are to be regarded as writers for the aristocracy. Popular literature gathered about the chief movement of the time among the people, the Reformation. The struggle for the emancipation of conscience from priestly control had begun in England nearly two centuries before, with Wyclif; and in spite of persecution the spirit of the Lollards had survived until the reign of Henry VIII. This spirit, strengthened by the example of the German and Swiss reformers, supplied the moral force which made Henry's political separation from Rome in 1534, on account of his first divorce, an opportunity for a real reformation. This force went out through the country in the sermons of Hugh Latimer, the boldest among Henry's reforming bishops, and the most powerful preacher of the day. He was of peasant birth; and his writings represent a development of popular English prose, straightforward, racy, simple as homespun.

The English Reformation.

The Reformation, and the controversies, religious and political, which grew out of it gave occasion for what we should call *journalism*, in the form of pamphlets, serious and satirical, both in prose and verse. It furnished also what came in course of time to be one of the strongest influences on the development of English style, in the

The English Bible and Prayer Book.

translation of the Bible by William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale (1526–1538), of which the popular character is shown by the fact that 97 per cent of the words are Anglo-Saxon. A union between the Latin-English style of the educated classes and the simple every-day speech of the people is shown by another literary monument of the Reformation, the Book of Common Prayer, prepared under the direction of Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII and Edward VI. Here the sonorous Latin words, full of suggestion for the lover of the classics, are often followed by their Anglo-Saxon equivalents, the sentences falling with a rhythm which is in part caught from Hebrew poetry, in part, perhaps, from the artificial style which foreign models had introduced into England.

The New Poetry.

While English prose was thus developing to express the ideas of the time on the two important subjects, culture and religion, poetry was also taking its modern form. The last poet of the old school of imitators of Chaucer was John Skelton (1460–1529). Toward the close of his life, however, he broke away from the tradition of his youth, and adopted a rough, short metre, adapted to the energy of his satire, which sounded the popular cry against abuses in church and state. In his harshness and meagreness he affords a striking contrast to two poets of the close of Henry's reign, who relieved the poverty of English verse with forms imported from Italy, and thus began modern English poetry—Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–1542) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517–1547).

Sir Thomas Wyatt.

The career of the former illustrates particularly the value to English literature of the close connection with foreign countries, which Henry VIII's ambition to take part in European affairs did so much to restore. Wyatt was frequently abroad on diplomatic missions; like Chaucer he visited

Italy and also Spain and France. His poems are, for the most part, translations and imitations, both of Italian poetry, especially the love-sonnet, and of more serious and didactic Latin poems, such as satires and epistles.

Wyatt's Sonnets.

The love-sonnet, in its origin, was the literary equivalent of that chivalry which led the knight of the Middle Age to show his devotion to his lady by fighting in field or in tournament for her protection and honor. The great examples of this chivalric love in poetic form had been given by Dante (1265–1321) in celebration of Beatrice, and Petrarch (1304–1374) in praise of Laura. By the latter the sonnet was established as a strict form, a poem in two parts, one of eight lines (the octave) rhyming *a b b a a b b a*, and the other of six (the sestet) in which several rhyme schemes were permitted. With Petrarch's imitators the sonnet had become a literary exercise, devoted to the expression of a love which might be entirely imaginary, or directed toward an imaginary person. Wyatt's sonnets, therefore, like those of his Italian masters, need not be regarded as having strict biographical truth, though attempts have been made to find in them the history of a personal relation, and some have guessed that they were in part inspired by Henry's second queen, Anne Boleyn. At all events Wyatt's poetry suggests that even a conventional form was for him the means for a sincere expression of feeling; even his translations seem charged with his own temperament, and his rendering of the Penitential Psalms is touched with personal religious emotion. Wyatt's effort to achieve the regularity and finish of his Italian models was not always successful; he makes bad rhymes, he fails to harmonize word and verse accent, he stumbles in scansion. Yet such poems as "Awake my lute" and "Forget not yet" are eminent examples of lyrical power.

Wyatt's companion poet, Surrey, born in 1517 and beheaded in 1547, was younger than his master both in years and in spirit. In contrast to Wyatt's gravity he has all the exuberance of the age, a perpetual charm of youth and promise, as his brilliant figure passes through the sunlight and shadow of Henry's court, moving gracefully and carelessly to the scaffold which awaited him. Like Wyatt he imitated the Italian amorous poets; but more significant than his love-poems are those of friendship, the sonnets to Clere and to Wyatt, and the elegy on the Duke of Richmond, which are full of feeling, intimate, personal, sincere. Often, as, for example, in the youthful poem which begins "The soote season," he shows an interest in nature, and an eye for details of country life which remind us of Milton's *L'Allegro*.

The Earl of Surrey.

Surrey, like Wyatt, rendered his chief service to English literature by enriching it with foreign forms. He was the first English poet to use blank verse, in his translation of two books of the *Æneid*. Blank verse had been used in Italy a few years before in a translation of the same work, so that Surrey did not originate the form; but the happy skill with which he adopted it, and thus discovered to English poetry its most powerful and characteristic verse form, is worthy of all praise. He also adapted the sonnet to English use, making it a poem of three quatrains followed by a couplet, a form rendered immortal by Shakespeare.

Surrey's Poetry.

Besides Wyatt and Surrey there were many courtiers of Henry VIII who used poetry as a sort of social accomplishment. Such verse was intended for private circulation in manuscript form. By the middle of the century, however, there had grown up a demand on the part of the reading public which publishers attempted to supply by volumes of

"Tottel's Miscellany"

miscellaneous verse. The first of these collections, *Tottel's Miscellany*, which contained the poems of Wyatt, Surrey, and several of their followers, appeared in 1557, a date which marks the public beginning of modern English poetry.

The influence of Wyatt and Surrey is shown in the work of Thomas Sackville, afterward Lord Buckhurst (1536–1608), contributed to a volume called *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1559). This book in general character looks back to an older fashion, being a collection of stories of persons who from their high place fell into tragic misfortune (it was, in fact, a continuation of a work of Lydgate called *The Falls of Princes*), but Sackville's "Induction" and "The Complaint of the Duke of Buckingham" are good modern poetry. He also wrote, in collaboration with Thomas Norton, the first regular English tragedy, *Gorboduc* (see page 113). Both in his contributions to *The Mirror*, which are in Chaucer's seven-line stanza, and in *Gorboduc*, which is in blank verse, Sackville shows surprising mastery of his form. He has a sureness of touch and a freedom from technical errors which put him beyond Surrey and Wyatt; and his imaginative energy is suggestive of the great poets who were to follow.

Thomas Sackville.

The same sure advance in technical mastery is shown by George Gascoigne (1535–1577). He, like Wyatt and Surrey, drew largely on foreign sources. His comedy, *The Supposes*, came from the Latin (through the Italian form of Ariosto) and his tragedy, *Jocasta*, from the Greek. His *Steele Glas* was an original satire in verse, but highly imitative. Against this product of imitation must be set his native verse, especially the "Lullaby of a Lover," which has all the lyrical and spiritual quality of Elizabethan song. It is noteworthy of his technical skill that he prepared a little treatise on versification, a text-book for other poets to

George Gascoigne.

follow, called "Notes of Instruction for the Writing of English Verse."

Except for the poets mentioned, however, it is a matter of remark that English literature through the reign of Henry VIII and the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, gives little promise of the outburst which was to mark the closing years of the century. That outburst was the result of a sudden, overwhelming enthusiasm in which the whole nation shared. After the uncertain conflict between the two religious parties which filled the reigns of Edward VI (1547–1553) and Mary (1553–1558), when it seemed as if the country would be plunged again into civil war, the accession of Elizabeth brought back the unity and prosperity which England had enjoyed under the early Tudors.

The force of the Renaissance, which had been checked for a time by national hesitation, manifested itself anew and more widely. Many things combined to give distinction to personal character, and variety and color to life. The enlarged possibilities of the world, the new lands beyond the sea, offered unlimited opportunity for action. The diffusion of knowledge of the past, together with the freedom of thought which the Reformation had brought about, afforded opportunities as tempting for speculative enterprise and imaginative adventure. Altogether there appeared to men a new, wider, richer world; and with it came a clearer consciousness of the individual personality which that world seemed made to satisfy. This discovery of the new world and of man, as it has been called, coming to the nation in the time of joyful reaction from the uncertainty and peril of Mary's reign, set the whole mass into vibration; but the tendencies which made for purely personal and selfish advancement were both directed and kept in check by the growth of national feeling. Elizabeth's reign united the nation, and her per-

The Age of Elizabeth.

sonal presence gave it a visible sign of unity. Under her rule England passed through an experience as dramatic as that of Athens at Marathon; after a long period of suspense the strain was relieved by the wonderful repulse of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The patriotism, made so intense by danger and victory, shines through the literature of the time. The eager, instinctive response of the people found utterance in the choruses of Shakespeare's *Henry V.* The more conscious political virtue, which touched with something of high purpose the lives of Sidney, of Sackville, even of Essex and Raleigh, is reflected in Spenser's *Faerie Queene.*

Elizabethan Literature.

It is easy to see how this spirit of the time finds expression in the drama and in lyric poetry—the more spontaneous and native types of Elizabethan literature. It is not so easy, but it is still interesting, to see it working itself out in the more conscious and artificial forms. The patriotism which repulsed the Armada made men seek to create a literature in keeping with England's national greatness. It turned their attention first of all to their language. Some held that English should be purified from words of foreign extraction; others that it should be enriched by coinages from the Latin and Greek. Questions of the structure and decoration of prose style brought into being a literature of rhetorical criticism. It was felt that the highest function of literature was to teach, and accordingly, to replace the romances and ballads which circulated among the people, authors sought to give serious employment to the printing-presses by providing them with works of instruction in all departments of knowledge. The poets seem instinctively to have felt the greatness of the future of English poetry, and to have taken conscious pride in their contribution to it. Like the prose writers, they were perplexed by many questions and theories. They suffered from the conception that dignified literature must

be didactic, and hence produced vastly long treatises on history, geography, and philosophy, which might better have been written in prose. They hesitated in the choice among foreign forms, and were troubled by the fact that classical poets did not use rhyme. But in all this writing, so much of which seems to us artificial and unvital, there is the impulse of adventure and experiment, the faith in learning and culture, and the pride in national achievement which characterize the Elizabethan age alike in exploration, in trade, in social life, and in war.

Stories and Histories.

The first works which should be mentioned in the Elizabethan period are those collections of material which served as mines whence the crude ore was taken which was afterward smelted into purer literary form of poetry and drama. Such was the collection of *novelle*, or short stories, mainly from Boccaccio and other Italian writers, made by William Painter in his *Palace of Pleasure* (1566). Such stories were immensely popular and furnished the plots of many of the stories of Greene and plays of Shakespeare. Another collection, *Tragicall Discourses* (1567) by Geoffrey Fenton, was drawn in the main from a later Italian novelist, Bandello. Bandello's stories were chiefly of the horrors of the later Renaissance; they were used extensively by dramatists after Shakespeare, led by the public demand for sensation to provide plays of lust and blood. But England had a book of tragedies of its own—the *Acts and Monuments* (1563), commonly called the "Book of Martyrs" of John Foxe, to which we owe those picturesque tales of the men and women who suffered martyrdom for their faith under Queen Mary. This book became the text-book of the Reformation, and to its heroic examples of constancy, as much as to any one influence, is due the severe, strenuous temper of the English religious mind later seen in Puritanism. Another work of English history to which later poets and drama-

tists, including Shakespeare, were much indebted was the *Chronycle* (1578) of England, Scotland, and Ireland, by Raphael Holinshed. For Roman history they resorted to the translation of Plutarch's *Lives* (1579) by Sir Thomas North. And in this connection may be mentioned Richard Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589).

The first concern of the Renaissance, it has been said, was with the individual—to enable him to realize the possibilities of life through training. It was the peculiar strength of the English Renaissance that this attitude was modified by the ideal of service to the state. This is well exemplified in the work of Roger Ascham (1515–1568), a famous scholar of the time and the tutor of the Princess Elizabeth. Of his two essays, the first, called *Toxophilus*, (1545) was ostensibly written in praise of archery; but it is really a defense of a sound, well-balanced life, with due attention to field-sports, of which Elyot had called "the shotyng in a longe bowe" the chief.

The second, *The Schoolmaster* (1570), sets forth the idea of education as a humanizing process in which the pupil must work with the teacher. Ascham was a scholar, and in his style as in his substance he marks the reverence for classical authority which followed the revival of learning. His purpose obliged him to choose English and to write simply, but he declares that it would have been easier for him to write in Latin. His view of life, however, is thoroughly English; he praises learning not for its own sake, but because it furnishes discipline for character and examples for conduct. For him the aim of life is social usefulness; the private virtues and the service of the individual to the state go hand in hand. "In very deed," he says, "the good or ill bringing up of children doth as much serve to the good or ill service of God, our Prince, and our whole countrie, as any one thing beside." As a

Roger Ascham.

Latinist and an Englishman he resented the strong influence of things Italian. He praises *The Courtier* of Castiglione (see page 74), which had been translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby (1551), but he attacks such collections of Italian stories as those found in the *Palace of Pleasure*, "whereby many young willes and wittes, allured to wantonnes, do now boldly contemne all severe bookes that sounde to honestie and Godlines." Particularly he reprobates the practice among Englishmen of resorting to Italy for study or travel, and quotes an Italian proverb, "*Englese Italianato é un diabolo incarnato*," or "an Italianate Englishman is a devil incarnate."

A more striking example of the literature of behavior is furnished by John Lyly (1553–1606). Lyly was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he seems to have gained the reputation of being a trifler—"the fiddlestick of Oxford," an enemy called him. His superficial cleverness, however, enabled him to write a successful account of the culture of the period, in *Euphues or the Anatomy of Wit* (1579), and its sequel, *Euphues and His England* (1580).

John Lyly.

Euphues is first of all a work of fiction, founded upon the situation, common in mediæval story, of two friends in love with the same girl. Instead of using this situation as an opportunity to illustrate the chivalric devotion of friendship, however, Lyly allows his model Euphues to displace his friend in the affection of his lady, who then cynically accepts a third suitor. By virtue of this plot *Euphues* may claim to be the first of English novels. More important than the story, however, is the teaching of the book. The plot serves to connect a series of conversations, letters, and essays, on such subjects as love, social relations, education, religion. The ideal of a thoroughly and symmetrically developed personality is implicit in the title, which means literally "well shaped in growing." It is important to note that

"Euphues."

Lyly gives a place to religious influence in moulding character. After an impressive setting forth of the advantages of worldly culture Euphues exclaims: "Vaine is Philosophy, vaine is Phisick, vaine is Law, vaine is all learning without that taste of divine knowledge."

In this there may have been a design to court favor by appealing to all the interests of the day, those of the Renaissance and of the Reformation as well. The timeliness of the book is shown by its popularity and its influence as a manual of public and social conduct. It set both a fashion of speech and a code of manners; a dialect and an etiquette for polite usage. However indirect, wasteful, and artificial this fashion now appears, it was in its time an evidence and a cause of refinement. One of the distinguishing accomplishments of the Renaissance was the elevation of social life into a fine art; and of this result in England *Euphues* was the chief sign.

Euphuism.

The artificial language which Euphues and his friends used, and which became a literary fashion, is the characteristic of the book for which it is remembered to-day. Among Lyly's mannerisms the most remarkable is the arrangement of words in antithesis, the contrast being marked by alliteration, thus: "Although I have *shrined* thee in my heart for a *trusty friend*, I will *shunne* thee hereafter as a *trothless foe*." Another peculiarity is his lavish use of similes drawn from what passed for natural history, as: "The milk of the Tygresse, that the more salt there is thrown into it the fresher it is." Euphuism was but one form of a widely diffused tendency in Renaissance literature, an attempt to prove the artistic value of prose by giving it some of the qualities of poetry. Earlier writers than Lyly, Ascham and Cranmer, had shown traces of it; and English prose did not escape from its influence until well on in the next century. In Lyly's own generation, which was distinguished

for its interest in all sorts of artistic experiments, other forms of this tendency appeared, notably that introduced by the most charming and the most forceful of the literary dilettantes of the age, Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586).

Sir Philip Sidney.

Philip Sidney was born in 1554, of one of the most distinguished families in England. He was sent to Shrewsbury school and to Oxford; and then spent some time abroad, in Paris, Vienna, and Italy, whence he returned to Elizabeth's court. There he represented the more elevated political conceptions of the time. His uncle, the Earl of Leicester, was the political chief of the Puritan party, which favored committing England to a definite alliance with the Protestant states of Europe; and in furtherance of this policy Sidney was sent on a mission to Germany in 1577. He was also eagerly interested in the development of English power on the sea. In 1583 he obtained a grant of land in America, and two years later he made an unsuccessful attempt to escape from court and join Sir Francis Drake in one of his half-piratical expeditions against the Spaniards. This same year he accompanied the English army which was sent to help the Dutch Protestants against Spain; and in 1586 he fell in a skirmish at Zutphen.

"Astrophel and Stella."

Sidney's name, more than any other, stands for the greatness of national and personal ideals which we traditionally associate with the age of Elizabeth. It is, therefore, somewhat disappointing to find his writing less eminent than his life. It must be remembered, however, that Sidney, like most men of position of his age, wrote not for the public but for himself and for a few friends. His works were published first in pirated editions, the *Arcadia* in 1590, and *Astrophel and Stella* in 1591. The latter is a collection of songs and sonnets, evidently addressed to one person,

Lady Penelope Devereux, afterward Lady Rich. Sidney and Lady Penelope had been betrothed when the latter was a child. For some reason the match was broken off, and Lady Penelope married Lord Rich, with whom she lived for a while most unhappily. Whether Sidney actually loved her when it was too late, or whether he wrote love-sonnets as a literary exercise, addressing them to his old friend out of compliment and sympathy, it is impossible to say. On the one hand there is in his sonnets much of the conventional material of the Italian sonneteers; but on the other there are touches so apt to the situation of a man who loves too late, that one hesitates to ascribe them to mere dramatic skill. In none of the many sonnet cycles of the age, except Shakespeare's and Spenser's, do we find so much that has the stamp of personality upon it; surely in none except these so much that has the accent of great poetry.

Sidney's chief literary adventure was the *Arcadia*, which he began in 1580, when, in consequence of a quarrel with the Earl of Oxford, he was in temporary disgrace and banishment from court. The writing of the *Arcadia* was merely a summer pastime, undertaken to please the Countess of Pembroke, Sidney's sister. The title of the work was suggested by romances, popular in Italy and in Spain, in which the scenes are laid in a pastoral country like the ancient Arcadia. The prose tale is interrupted at intervals by passages of verse, imitated from the eclogues of Virgil and Theocritus, in which the shepherds sing of love and the delights of rural life. This form of literature had an immense charm for countries which were becoming a little weary of the activity of the early Renaissance; and Sidney himself, in his banishment from court, doubtless felt the influence of this mood. It was, however, a passing one, for Sidney adopts as the prevailing model of his fiction the late Greek romances, which were then being

The "Arcadia."

translated into English, and which abound in adventures of all kinds connected by the most intricate plots.

In his attempt at enrichment of style, Sidney worked as consciously as Lyly. He frequently uses the antithesis and other mechanical devices, but his chief resource is in prodigality of ornament and elaboration of figure. For example, one character is besought "to keep her speech for a while within the paradise of her mind." Undressing is described as "getting the pure silver of their bodies out of the ore of their garments." This boldness of metaphor is characteristic of the spirit of the book. Sidney writes as if seeking adventures among words, with the enthusiasm that he might have thrown into a buccaneering expedition to the Indies, if fortune had been kind to him.

The Style of the "Arcadia."

The verse passages which divide the several books of the *Arcadia* are interesting for their attempts at imitation of various artificial Italian forms. Sidney was, in verse as in prose, an amateur and an experimenter. He was interested in the plan of using Latin metres to the exclusion of the rhyming verse natural to the English tongue. This attempt was in line with similar undertakings in France and Italy, and serves to show how strong and how dangerous an influence the revival of learning exerted upon the beginnings of modern literature.

Sidney's Literary Theories.

Sidney subsequently shook himself partly free from such artistic vagaries. In 1579 Stephen Gosson published a pamphlet called *The School of Abuse*, in which, as a Puritan, he attacked the art of the age, especially the drama. Sidney replied with his *Defence of Poesie* in 1581. In this, one of the earliest pieces of English criticism, Sidney showed his classicism by his approval of plays built on the Latin model; but he defended English poetry, even of the native-ballad sort, exclaiming, "I never heard the

"The Defence of Poesie."

old song of 'Percy and Douglas' that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet."

Sidney's *Arcadia* and Lyly's *Euphues* were the two significant books of the time, and they were naturally the models for authors who depended upon the reading public. Apart from the writers who gathered about the court—amateurs like Sidney or those who, like Spenser, looked for support to the patronage of the rich and preferment from the Queen—there appeared in the reign of Elizabeth a group of men who lived directly on their literary earnings. These latter were often men of university education who had lost caste. As a class they showed the intense desire for sensual enjoyment, the violence of passion, the impatience of restraint, social or moral, that accompanied the assertion of individuality in the Renaissance. The irregularity of their lives, which ended often in misery or disgrace, has made them the heroes of stories famous among the tragedies of literature. Marlowe was stabbed to death in a tavern brawl; Peele died of dissipation; Greene, as the story goes, from surfeiting; and Nashe, we are told, of starvation.

The Popular Writers.

Such men turned chiefly to the theatre, as the most profitable market for literature; but they have left also a large body of miscellaneous writings, fiction, biography, pamphlets. They were not experimenters and innovators, like Sidney and his circle, but they were quick to test any literary theory or form by its adaptability to popular taste. Robert Greene (1560–1592) began his career by imitating Lyly, in a number of euphuistic romances. After the *Arcadia* had begun to circulate in manuscript, he wrote *Menaphon* (1589), a pastoral tale in which he clearly imitated Sidney's style. Instead of the conventional eclogues, sung on the occasion of a rustic festival which interrupts the plot, he introduced songs as expressions of the true feel-

Robert Greene.

ing of his characters at appropriate places in the story, just as Shakespeare did in his plays. Better known than *Menaphon* is *Pandosto* (1588), a somewhat similar narrative, on which Shakespeare based his *Winter's Tale*. Greene's most individual work was done in his realistic accounts of the arts of swindlers in London, and in the partly autobiographical narratives, *Greene's Repentance* and *Never Too Late*, in which he drew from his own life lessons of morality, possibly with a view to the increasing importance of the Puritan part of the reading public.

Thomas Lodge.

Another writer who for some years belonged to the crew of literary adventurers was Thomas Lodge (1558–1625). His romance, *Rosalynde* (1590), which furnished the story of *As You Like It*, is the most perfect bit of fiction of the time. In his subtitle, *Euphues' Golden Legacy*, Lodge recognized his obligations to Lyly; but his style is far less artificial than that of his prototype, and the exquisite pastoral setting (preserved by Shakespeare in his Forest of Arden) is to be set down rather to Sidney's influence. Lodge, like Greene and Nashe, had the lyrical gift which few writers of the time were wholly without. His highest fame is as the writer of the exquisite songs with which he interspersed his romances, such as "Love in my Bosom Like a Bee," and "Like to the Clear in Highest Sphere," from *Rosalynde*.

Thomas Nashe and Picaresque Romance.

Thomas Nashe (1567–1600) was a journalist with a keen weapon of satire, whose pamphlets appealed to public interest in serious questions, such as the power of the bishops, and in private scandal, such as gathered about his friend, Robert Greene. His chief importance is due to his adoption of a new model for fiction. The *Arcadia* and *Euphues* are both aristocratic, in that they tend to preserve the ideal of knightly virtue or to replace it by

that of the cultivated gentleman. There was beginning to appear, however, a kind of story which set up the very opposite of this ideal; instead of a knight errant who goes on a quest to find the Holy Grail or to serve his lady, the author gives us the rogue errant who goes on a quest to satisfy his appetites. This sort of story, called picaresque, from the Spanish *picaro* or rogue, was very popular in Spain, whence examples were brought to England. Nashe imitated them in *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), which narrates the practical jokes, travels, and adventures of Jack Wilton, an English boy adrift on the Continent, enlivened by fictitious interviews with important persons, fictitious eye-witness accounts of striking events, and other journalistic tricks.

These writers represent the eccentric, ornamented, often loosely constructed prose of the Renaissance; a prose which was to be carried on by the writers of the next generation, and to become the typical style of the seventeenth century. Beside them, however, must be mentioned a writer who stands for a saner, more intellectual development of literary style. During the later years of Elizabeth's reign the country was distracted by a dispute between the Anglican bishops and the Puritans, who denied their authority. This dispute soon passed the bounds of literary controversy; and the refusal of the Puritans to attend the services of the Church of England, and the efforts of the government to compel them, made the matter one of politics. Before the break was irreparable, however, the argument for the authority of the church was stated with winning eloquence by Richard Hooker (1553–1600) in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, four books of which were published in 1594, a fifth in 1597, and three more after the author's death. As befits the subject, Hooker's prose is grave and regular, with something of the precision of classic style, as opposed to the wilfulness and unconventionality

Richard Hooker.

of Sidney's romantic manner. Indeed, Hooker was the earliest writer who developed a very competent form of English prose to fulfil a serious intellectual purpose.

The development of a great prose literature in England was reserved for a later century; the chief glory of the English Renaissance was its poetry. The experiments and studies in foreign forms, made by Wyatt and Surrey, were the preparation for a period of wonderfully poetic achievement, in which two names stand clearly first. As in the drama there rises above earlier and later playwrights the single surpassing figure of Shakespeare, so in non-dramatic poetry stands pre-eminent Edmund Spenser (1552–1599), the poet of *The Faerie Queene.*

Edmund Spenser.

Spenser was born in London in 1552. He was sent to the Merchant Tailors' School, and then to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he took his master's degree in 1576. In 1578 he was in London, in attendance on the Earl of Leicester, seeking to establish himself through the influence of his friends at court. After the publication of his *Shepherd's Calendar*, in 1579, preferment came to him in the shape of an appointment in Ireland, as secretary to the deputy, Lord Grey de Wilton. In Ireland Spenser was given office, and bought the Manor of Kilcolman, whither Sir Walter Raleigh came to visit him. Raleigh saw the first three books of *The Faerie Queene,* and under his advice Spenser went to London in the following year, to read them to the Queen and to publish them. The success of the poem was immediate, but the reward from the Queen, in whose honor it was written, was disappointingly small. Soon after its publication Spenser put forth a volume of poems styled *Complaints.* The circumstances of his journey to London he related, after his return to Ireland, in "Colin Clout's Come Home Again," in which he resumed the pastoral style of (*The Shepherd's Calendar*). In the next few years Spenser was busy with his courtship and marriage,

which are beautifully commemorated in the sonnet series, the "Amoretti," and in his wedding-song, or "Epithalamion." He went to London again in 1596 to publish the second three books of *The Faerie Queene*. During this visit he wrote the "Hymn of Heavenly Love," and "Hymn of Heavenly Beauty," to accompany two earlier "Hymns in Honor of Love and Beauty." He also wrote in London the most exquisite of his shorter poems, the "Prothalamion." Soon after his return to Kilcolman, there broke out one of those frequent insurrections which marked British rule in Ireland. Spenser's castle, which stood in the path of the storm, was sacked and burned. He fled with his family to London, where, in 1599, he died.

Spenser's life was spent chiefly in three places, each of which left strong marks upon his character and work—Cambridge, London, and Ireland. At Cambridge he found the learning of the Renaissance, especially the philosophy of Plato, which appears clearly in *The Faerie Queene* and in the "Hymns." Here also he came to know the literature of France and Italy; his first published work consisted of translations from Petrarch and the French poet du Bellay. At Cambridge, also, he came into contact with the literary theories of the time, one of which was that English verse should be written according to Latin rules of prosody. This subject is discussed at length in the letters which passed between Spenser, after he removed to London, and his Cambridge friend, Gabriel Harvey. Spenser was too genuine a poet to be injured by such theories, but the influence of the environment where they were rife is seen in his scrupulous attention to the technical requirements of his art.

Spenser at Cambridge.

Of this Cambridge period the typical product is *The Shepherd's Calendar*, a series of twelve pastoral poems or eclogues. The eclogue in general was a poem of pastoral

life, in which shepherds were the speakers, rural nature and love their usual themes. The poet might introduce matter personal to himself or his friends, or might even discuss political affairs, but he kept the conventional framework. In Spenser's fifth eclogue, for example, Archbishop Grindal figures as the good shepherd Algrind. The poems of *The Shepherd's Calendar* show much variety in metre, for Spenser was clearly practising and experimenting. But most remarkable among their literary qualities is the diction, which he elaborated for himself with the design of giving a suggestion of antiquity and rusticity to his writing. This curious predilection for obsolete or coined words is one manifestation of the artificial style affected by the age. It is carried so far in *The Faerie Queene* that Ben Jonson could say of Spenser that he "writ no language."

"The Shepherd's Calendar."

In London Spenser was at the centre of the thrilling national life of England. Through Leicester and Sidney he was introduced to the two leading political conceptions of the time, England's leadership of the Protestant cause in Europe against Spain and Rome, and her expansion beyond the seas; ideas that were the result partly of fantastic chivalry, and partly of a broad view of world politics. Finally, in Ireland he saw the English race in passionate conflict with opposing forces. The chronically disturbed state of the country was aggravated by the intrigues of Philip of Spain and the Pope with the Irish chieftains, provoking those revolts which Lord Grey, strong in his belief that the Irish were the foes of God and of civilization, put down with savage fury. Naturally, Spenser's residence in Ireland, by bringing him into actual conflict with evil, stimulated his moral enthusiasm. Out of the conception of the greatness of England's mission which Spenser found in London and struggled to realize in Ire-

Spenser in London and Ireland.

land, and out of his chivalric devotion to this ideal and to the Queen who typified it, grew *The Faerie Queene*. It is the brightest expression of the ideal morality of the time; and in a sense is the epic of the English race at one of the great moments of its history.

Spenser and his contemporaries regarded moral purpose as essential to the greatest art; and with Spenser this purpose took the form of dealing with the old problem of the Renaissance—individual character in relation to the state. As he explained in his introductory letter to Raleigh, *The Faerie Queene* was to show forth the character of an ideal knight, in twelve books, each devoted to one of the twelve qualities of perfect chivalry. This exposition of private virtue was to be followed by a second poem, which should portray the virtues of the ideal knight as governor. In fact, Spenser wrote only six books, each of twelve cantos; and a fragment of a seventh. The first is given to the Red Cross Knight, who represents Holiness; the second to Sir Guyon, or Temperance; the third to Britomarte, or Chastity; the fourth to Cambel and Triamond, or Friendship; the fifth to Sir Artegall, or Justice; the sixth to Sir Calidore, or Courtesy. These knights, as we learn from Spenser's introductory letter, are despatched on their various quests by Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland. In the course of their adventures appears from time to time the perfect knight, Arthur, who is himself in search of the Faerie Queene. The thread of the narrative is much interrupted by episodes. Moreover, the allegory, which should give unity to the whole, is inconsistent and complicated. It takes at times a political turn, and the characters, besides representing ideal qualities, refer directly to actual persons. Spenser explained: "In that Faerie Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our soveraine the Queene." Belphœbe

The Structure of "The Faerie Queene."

and Britomarte also represent Elizabeth; Arthur is Leicester; the false lady Duessa is Mary Queen of Scots. In the fifth book the political state of Europe is presented at length, with Lord Grey as Artegall, France as Flourdelis, Henry IV as Burbon, Holland as Belge, and Philip II of Spain as Grantorto. This was but natural in an age in which politics were largely a matter of religion, and in which public and private conduct, as typified by Sidney, Raleigh, and Essex, was still touched with something of the glamour of the chivalry which had passed away.

Spenser and Ariosto.

The moral seriousness which underlies the poem marks the great difference between *The Faerie Queene* and its Italian prototype. Spenser, like Wyatt and Surrey, was content to go to school to Italy; and he chose as the model for his great work the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. Both Ariosto and Spenser deal with chivalry; but while Ariosto had merely the delight of the artist in the brilliant color which chivalry gave to life, with the easy contempt of the cynic for its moral pretensions, Spenser found in its persons and ideals a means of making goodness attractive. Ariosto pictures chivalric action because it is dramatic and exciting, not because he believes in it. Spenser deals with action because he must. His world is one which, according to the Platonic conception, is capable of being brought into harmony with an ideal. Naturally, to him the virtues which make for the effectiveness of the individual and the progress of the race are of supreme importance; and the opposing vices, idleness, gluttony, lechery, and above all despair, are the objects of his fiercest attack.

The Spenserian Stanza.

In details Spenser learned much from Ariosto; many passages he wrote in avowed imitation. His prevailing difference is in the greater richness and elaboration of his style, of which the verse form of *The Faerie Queene*, the Spenserian stanza, is typical. Ariosto wrote in *ottav rima*, that is,

in stanzas of eight lines rhyming thus: *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *c*, *c*. Spenser used a more complicated stanza of his own, with rhymes arranged thus, *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *b*, *c*, *b*, *c*, *c*, the last line being an Alexandrine, or line of six feet. The brilliancy of the invention is shown by the fact that it adapts itself readily to the different demands of narrative, descriptive, and moral poetry; and that the poem sustains itself throughout its great length with so little effect of sameness.

Spenser's Art.

Spenser had the great gift of the poet, the power to create the illusion of a different world, a world of magic where the imagination and the senses are satisfied. With all his morality, Spenser shared in the rich sensuous life which the Renaissance had thrown open to men. This immediate reliance upon the senses is one of the elements of reality which give greatness to his poem. *The Faerie Queene* is a long procession of figures, brilliant, fantastic, or terrible, which singly or in groups pass across an ever-varying, ever-wonderful landscape. And almost as marked as his feeling for form and color is his use of sound. His sensitiveness of ear is shown by the melody of his verse, so constant yet so varied; but there are also many passages in which he makes the music of nature an element of pleasure in his palace of art, notably in the description of the Bower of Bliss, in Book II, Canto XII. And more poignant sensuous appeal is not lacking. Altogether, Spenser has the resources of the whole world of sensation at command, and he never fails to heighten them with the illusions of his art. Of the color, the savor, the music of life, his poem is full—only the color is brighter, the taste sweeter, the music grander, than any which it is given to mortal senses to know.

And this world of imagined splendor is presented as the background of a steadily growing idea of righteousness, of heroic goodness. The union of the two ele-

ments, sensuous and moral, seems at times to involve a naïve inconsistency. But Spenser belonged to an age when it seemed not impossible that there should be some common ground between the spirit of the Reformation and that of humanism. He was perhaps a Puritan; but, more fortunate than Milton, he came before Puritanism had narrowed its view of life to the single issue of salvation. There is, indeed, in Spenser, as in many of his contemporaries, a note of melancholy, which suggests that the eternal contradiction of the joy of the present life by the threat of its hereafter, was not unheard. The flowers are already lightly touched by the frost. But this reminder that the time of free delight in the world of sense was so short, its sunshine so threatened by the clouds of Puritanism, makes its most signal product the more precious.

His Morality.

Spenser's latent Puritanism can be traced in the reserve with which he usually treats passion. A franker, more unrestrained abandonment to sensuous feeling of every kind marks such poems as Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, in which the tide of the Renaissance in England reaches its height. Marlowe died before he could complete the poem, which was finished by George Chapman (1559–1634). Chapman was one of the most considerable literary men of the time. His appearance as a poet was somewhat late, his first important work being Ovid's *Banquet of Sense* (1595). Three years later he published the last four books of *Hero and Leander*. His famous translation of the *Iliad* he completed in 1611, and the *Odyssey* two years later. Long before this, in 1595, he had begun to write for the stage, his great work being a series of tragedies on subjects drawn from the history of France during the time of Catherine de Medici's influence.

George Chapman.

In his poetry, both original and translated, Chapman is rather a man of the succeeding age than an Elizabethan. In him the fulness and splendor of Elizabethan poetry, which had reached their height in Spenser, tend to elaboration, conceit, and obscurity, faults which unfortunately mar the greatest of his works, the translation of Homer. For the *Iliad* he chose the old English ballad metre. The sustained movement of this measure gives it a certain likeness to Homer's hexameters; but, on the other hand, its facility and informality tend to produce a jog-trot familiarity in place of Homer's rapidity and nobility. Moreover, Chapman is deliberately indirect and fanciful, where Homer is direct and simple. Nevertheless, it was a circumstance almost as fortunate in its way for the English people as the series of happy accidents by virtue of which the English Bible became great literature, that the first translation of the noblest poetry of antiquity should have been made by one who, in spite of all his failings, was a true poet.

Chapman's Homer.

Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Marlowe's and Chapman's *Hero and Leander* are perhaps the only long poems of the Elizabethan period which are still read. For the poets of that day, keenly interested as they were in artistic problems, failed to solve the most essential of them; they never separated the proper subject-matter of poetry from that of prose. They gave verse form not only to history, but also to politics, philosophy, geography, and science. Accordingly many of them, in spite of genuine poetic gift, have all but disappeared from view, hopelessly distanced in the race for immortality by reason of their bulk of unpoetical material. One of these leviathans is Michael Drayton (1563–1631). He devoted himself largely to history, his most characteristic work being his *Barons' Wars*, an account of the deposition of Edward II and the subsequent fall of

Other Poets.

Mortimer. Drayton was capable of gaining a genuine inspiration from history, as is shown by his superb "Ballad of Agincourt," the ringing metre of which is preserved in Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." Unfortunately he is known not by this spirited lyric, but as the author of *Polyolbion*, a huge poem in Alexandrines, containing a descriptive geography of England. Like Drayton, Samuel Daniel (1562–1619) served the historical muse in a long narrative of the Wars of the Roses, and he wrote also a poem called *Musophilus*, or "A general defense of all learning." Among other curiosities of poetic treatment are William Warner's *Albion's England;* Lord Brooke's *Poems of Monarchy* and *Treatise on Religion;* Sir John Davies's *Nosce Teipsum*, a poem on human life and the immortality of the soul. Mistaken as such efforts in poetry seem to us, they must be thought of as part of that attempt already mentioned to give the English nation a literature worthy of its past and its high destiny.

Lyric Poetry.

It is not of these works, however, that we think when we speak of the glory of Elizabethan verse, but of the lyric quality which in nearly all the poets of the time flows somewhere as a stream of living water, making glad even the waste places of their larger works. Almost every poet of note published his cycle of love songs and sonnets; besides Shakespeare's, Spenser's, and Sidney's sonnets, there are Constable's *Diana*, Daniel's *Delia*, Drayton's *Idea*, Lodge's *Phyllis*. Many of them published series of eclogues in the manner of Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*—Drayton's *Shepherd's Garland* being among the most beautiful. But much more precious than this conventional and formal lyric art is the less premeditated singing of scores of poets, which was collected in the poetic miscellanies, such as *The Phœnix Nest*, *England's Helicon*, and Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*, and in the song-books.

Many of the fugitive lyrics of the period are of doubtful attribution or altogether anonymous, but of the songs that can be assigned to any one writer a large share belongs to Thomas Campion (1540–1613). Campion's verse is practically and honestly adapted to musical requirements, for the Elizabethan poet always conceived of a song as a thing to be sung. Like many of his contemporaries, Campion was stirred to rapture alike by sacred and profane love. Indeed, one of the peculiarities of the Elizabethan lyric poets is their mingling of sensuousness and piety—the latter not induced by fear of death, but by a trust in the Creator as frank and honest as was their delight in the world which He had made.

Thomas Campion.

How common was the lyrical gift in the last years of Elizabeth's reign, is shown by the number of men of action who were also poets. The group of literary courtiers, of whom Sidney was the chief, included a name as famous as his, that of Sir Walter Raleigh (1552–1618). Raleigh's place in literature belongs to him chiefly through his *History of the World*, one of the monuments of English prose in the next century; but the fragment of a long poem, *Cynthia*, the sonnet introductory to *The Faerie Queene*, and various tags of verse like the reply to Marlowe's "Come, live with me and be my Love," and "The Lie," show that he possessed, in the words of a critic of the time, a vein of poetry "most lofty, insolent, and passionate." The tone of his poetry is on the whole singularly gloomy and bitter. His verses commemorate, for the most part, times of reaction and trouble in his checkered life, when he was thrown back by failure on the scepticism, distrust, and contempt that were fundamental in his nature.

The Courtly Poets.

Raleigh's rival both in glory and in misfortune, the Earl of Essex, the brother of Sidney's Stella, was himself a poet. Another member of the group of courtly poets

was Sir Edward Dyer, a friend of Sidney's, who is remembered as the writer of the lines, "My mind to me a Kingdom is." Still another was the Earl of Oxford.

The lyric and the drama must be counted as the great literary forms of the period, for these two represented truth to feeling and truth to life. Upon the rest of the literature of the sixteenth century, even including Spenser's wonderful poem, rested a blight of artificiality. The age was in the main one of conscious learning from masters, classical and foreign; of imitation; of uncertainty as to the principles and the uses of literature. The writers of the time were hampered by uncritical selection of material, by the requirements of conventions such as that which prescribed the pastoral, even by absurd theories such as that which tried to proscribe rhyme. Only in two directions, the lyric and the drama, did they win complete freedom, and in both they used it grandly.

CHAPTER V

THE RENAISSANCE: THE DRAMA BEFORE SHAKESPEARE

THE drama, as has been pointed out, was the most popular literary form of the Renaissance, as it was also the most powerful and spontaneous. It expressed, as no other literary product could have done, the manifold life of the Elizabethan age. Its chief glory is, of course, Shakespeare; but the school of dramatists from which Shakespeare proceeded was the result of a steady growth, prolonged through nearly four centuries. To trace the English drama from the beginning, we must go back even beyond the Norman conquest.

The English Drama.

One familiar with the highly developed forms of tragedy and comedy which existed in ancient Greece and Rome might naturally presume that there was a continuous stream of plays derived from these throughout the Middle Ages; but this presumption would be entirely contrary to the facts. Both tragedy and comedy were native to Greece and flourished there with splendid natural vigor. In Rome, on the other hand, they were exotic, a literary fad or fashion introduced from Greece and cultivated only by a comparatively small circle of the upper classes. The popular stage entertainments of Rome were more like our vaudeville or variety shows, and as Roman culture decayed they became less and less dramatic and unspeakably indecent and immoral. As the Christian Church grew in power, its opposition to the stage became more effective. Plays were prohibited and actors proscribed in city after city throughout the Roman Empire.

The Decline of Roman Drama.

Religious Source of the Drama.

Some three or four hundred years after the death of the Roman stage there began to appear in the services of the church bits of drama, so tiny and so simple dramatically that they may well have been composed with no clear appreciation of their significance. The earliest of these was a little scene representing the visit of the three Marys to the sepulchre of Christ on Easter morning, and their interview with the angels who are there to tell them that Christ has risen and will meet them in Galilee. The dialogue consists of only four sentences, but the little scene contains the essential elements of drama; it presents a story by means of actors who impersonate the characters of the story. Soon this scene was enlarged by the introduction of other characters, the expansion of the dialogue. Other scenes of Bible history were also dramatized as parts of the church service: the Visit of the Shepherds to the New-Born Babe at Bethlehem, the Visit of the Magi or Wise Men of the East, the Slaughter of the Innocents, and finally a whole series of scenes from the Old Testament. At first all these scenes were written in Latin and were sung as parts of the service of the church. But as they increased in number and in size they were first separated from the service, then translated into the language of the common people, and finally presented outside of the church—in the church porch, or the church yard, or some public square.

Cycles of Plays.

The earliest of these little plays was composed on the Continent about the year 900. The earliest of which we have any record in England belongs to the last third of the tenth century. The development of which we have just spoken occupied about four hundred years and by the beginning of the fourteenth century had resulted in vast plays or series of plays which were performed once a year in most of the principal towns of England. Four complete sets

of these have been preserved to us. Three of these sets of plays—cycles they are commonly called—belonged to the cities of York, Wakefield, and Chester, and are called by their names. We have fragments also from Norwich, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Dublin, and records of performances in many places. All these plays were alike in origin and structure and general content. They begin with the Creation and treat biblical episodes relating to the plan of salvation, including always the Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve, the Death of Abel, the Deluge, the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Prophecies of the Coming of Christ, the Birth, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, and the Final Judgment. In their own day they were called Corpus Christi plays or Whitsun plays, from the time at which they were performed, or Craft plays, because they were performed by the crafts or trades-guilds of the towns. In France somewhat similar plays were called *Mystères*, and for the last hundred and fifty years it has been customary with scholars to call the English plays *Mysteries* or *Mystery Plays*.

The Mystery Plays.

In order to gain some idea of the appeal made by such plays to the audience for which they were intended, let us imagine ourselves for a moment in a provincial English town at the beginning of the fifteenth century, on the morning of Corpus Christi day. Weeks beforehand heralds have made the round of the city and the neighboring villages to announce the coming spectacle. The places where the cars or "pageants," which form both stage and dressing-room, are to stop, are crowded with the motley population of a mediæval city and countryside. The spectators of consequence occupy seats upon scaffolds erected for the purpose, or look on from the windows of neighboring houses, while the humbler folk jostle each other in the street. Soon the first pageant appears, a great box mounted on four or six wheels, and drawn by horses belonging to the

masons' guild, which guild is charged with presenting the Creation of Eve and the Fall of Man. The curtains at the front and the side of the great box are drawn, revealing an upper compartment, within which the main action is to take place. On a raised platform sits enthroned a majestic person in a red robe, with gilt hair and beard, impersonating the Creator. Before him lies Adam, dressed in a close-fitting leather garment painted white or flesh-color. The Creator, after announcing his intention of making for Adam a helpmeet, descends and touches the sleeper's side. Thereupon Eve rises through a trap-door, and Adam wakes rejoicing. Again the Creator ascends to his throne, and Adam withdraws to a corner of the pageant, leaving Eve to be tempted by a great serpent cunningly contrived of green and gold cloth, in which an actor is concealed. This monster, crawling upon the stage from below, harangues Eve with lengthy eloquence. Then follows the eating of the apple and the coming of God's angels, with gilt hair, scarlet robes, and swords waved and ridged like fire, to drive the pair from the garden into the wilderness, that is, into the lower compartment of the pageant, which is now uncovered to view. A trumpeter advances before the car, and sounds a long note in token of the conclusion of the play. The horses are reharnessed to the car, and it moves off to the next station, to be replaced by others. These represent in turn Noah's Flood, given by the guild of water-merchants; the Sacrifice of Isaac, given by the butchers' guild; the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and so on in long procession, until the crowning spectacle of the Day of Judgment. The chief feature of spectacular interest in this last is Hell-Mouth, a great dragon's jaw belching flame and smoke, into which lost souls, dressed in black and yellow parti-color, are tossed by the devil—a most satisfactory character with a bright red beard, a hairy body, a hideous mask, horns, and a long forked tail.

Crude and even grotesque as much of this seems, the miracle play was, to the men of the Middle Ages, a very impressive thing. It not only appealed to their religious natures and to their love of spectacle; it also interested them profoundly from the human side. For the authors were free to embellish the biblical story with episodes drawn from the common life of their own day. Even when these added episodes took a broadly farcical turn, nobody was shocked, any more than by the stone imps and monsters which grinned at them from the solemn shadows of their cathedrals. In the play of Noah's Flood, the patriarch causes first the animals to enter the Ark, then his sons and daughters-in-law; but when he comes to his wife, she objects. She does not relish being cooped up without her "gossips," and leaving these amiable women to drown. Remonstrances at last proving fruitless, Noah resorts to the argument of blows, and drives his scolding helpmeet into the Ark, to the great delight of the crowd. In the play of Abraham and Isaac, the yearning love of the old man for his little son, and the sweet, trustful nature of the boy, are brought home to us in such a way as to intensify the pathos of the moment when Abraham makes ready, at the Lord's command, to sacrifice the life which is dearest to him on earth. The pleading of the boy, the gradual overmastering of his fear of death by his pity for his father's anguish and his solicitude for his mother's grief, are rendered with touching truth.

Germs of Regular Drama.

> Therfor doo owr Lordes bydding,
> And wan I am ded, then prey for me:
> But, good fader, tell ye my moder no-thyng,
> Say that I am in another cunthre dwellyng.

In these episodes, and in many others which might be given, lie the germs of regular drama. Such humorous scenes as the quarrel of Noah and his wife constitute in

reality crude little comedies out of which regular comedy could readily grow. In such tragic scenes as the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Slaughter of the Innocents, and the Crucifixion, the elements of noble tragedy were already present.

Another type of play very popular in England during the Middle Ages was the Miracle Play. It was a dramatization of the legend of some saint or martyr and presented either miracles performed by the saint or his relics or image, or the sufferings and death of the martyr. The earliest of these was the play of Saint Katharine, performed by the schoolboys of Dunstable about the year 1110, under the direction of their schoolmaster Geoffrey. The latest were perhaps the three performed at Braintree in Essex, from 1529 to 1533, to obtain funds for roofing the church. These plays must have given a better opportunity for free composition and for the development of realism in the presentation of character and incident than the Mysteries, but unfortunately no typical examples of this class of plays have come down to us, except the late fifteenth-century *Play of the Sacrament* and *The Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalen*.

The Miracle Plays.

Both Mysteries and Miracle Plays dealt primarily with the teachings of the church, theological or devotional. To complete this teaching there was needed some exposition of the ethical side of religion, which deals with matters of conduct; and it was this ethical doctrine which the "morality plays" tried to bring home to men's minds. The Morality was a dramatized allegory. By means of personifications of such abstractions as the World, the Flesh, Mankind, Mercy, Justice, Peace, the Seven Deadly Sins, Good and Bad Angels, Old Age, and Death, the Morality Plays attempted to represent, in a graphic way which would appeal to popular audiences, the conflict between sin and righteousness for the possession of the human soul. The

The Morality Plays.

early Moralities have an earnestness of purpose, and a largeness of theme, which make them no unworthy supplement to the mystery cycles. One of the most impressive is *Everyman*, which presents the soul (called Everyman) as summoned by Death to appear before God, and appealing to all the forces upon which he had relied in this life—Riches, Beauty, Strength, Friendship, Kindred—to go with and support him, but deserted by all except the despised Good Deeds. Little by little, however, their character changed: the treatment was narrowed so as to include only a single aspect of man's life; the characters became less and less abstract, and farcical matter was introduced to lighten the intolerably solemn tone. In most of the Moralities, from the middle of the fifteenth century onward, the principal character is one called by various names, but usually labelled the Vice. In some plays he is only a comic figure, dressed in the costume of a court-fool, carrying a sword of lath, and indulging in slapstick farce for the delectation of the crowd; but more often he has the additional function of master of all the intrigue, creating misunderstanding and strife by ingenious tricks or wilful lies. By some critics he is supposed to survive in the fools of Shakespeare's plays, but these have little or nothing to do with the Vice; they are merely the court-fool or domestic fool of the time transferred to the stage. The Vice appears in such early plays as *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and *Ralph Roister Doister;* if he appears at all in the plays of Shakespeare and his successors, it is rather in the guise of the motiveless, intriguing villain than in that of the fool.

The Interludes.

About the beginning of the sixteenth century, while the moralities were yet in the height of their vogue, arose another form of play called loosely the Interlude—though interlude was a term originally applied vaguely to any sort of play brief enough to be presented in the intervals of a banquet or

other entertainment. These plays were very different in type and in origin. Some were derived from the Moralities themselves, some from French farces, some from *débats* (a French species of controversial dialogue); some from Latin school-plays, and some by the simple process of dramatizing an anecdote in prose or verse. In the old play of *Sir Thomas More*, a band of strolling players is announced while Sir Thomas is dining, and they perform an Interlude before him and his guests. Usually these pieces had little action and required almost no stage-setting. For example, *The Four P's*, by John Heywood, "a newe and a very mery enterlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Potycary and a Pedlar," is nothing more than an amusing series of speeches by the four impersonators, in which they vaunt their several callings, make themselves out very arrant rascals indeed, and by so doing satirize the society which they represent. The Interludes, as a whole, afford a curious illustration of the growing intellectual curiosity of the Renaissance, as well as of the popular devotion to the dramatic form.

Other Popular Plays.

Besides the Mysteries, Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes, there were several sorts of plays of popular origin: wooing-plays and other jigs derived from ancient folk-customs; Robin Hood plays derived from the ballads; sword-plays and dances; and Christmas plays, or "mummings," faint survivals of primitive pagan religious ceremonies dating almost from the very infancy of the human race, and still surviving in remote corners of England, as may be learned from the charming account given in Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native*.

Other Influences.

Influences affecting the composition of plays as well as the costuming and staging of them flowed also from sources not strictly dramatic. From a very remote period, Christmas and other great festival seasons and occasions had been cele-

brated by elaborate and richly costumed disguisings, processions, tournaments, and other similar spectacles. As time passed these became more and more dramatic and in turn exercised a more and more powerful influence, direct and indirect, upon the drama and the stage.

In addition to these native elements in the formation of the drama, there was an important influence from without. This influence was classical, and came from the great revival of interest in Latin literature, which marked the beginning of the Renaissance. It became the fashion in the sixteenth century for schoolmasters to present the comedies of Terence and Plautus on the stages of grammar schools, with the students as actors. Before 1541 Nicholas Udall, head master of Eton, wrote for his boys a play, modelled after Plautus, called *Ralph Roister Doister*, the first regular English comedy. The importance of *Ralph Roister Doister*, in furnishing English playwrights with an example of rapid dialogue and clear construction of plot, can hardly be overestimated. The play is, however, an artificial production, with very little local color, or truth to English life. The next notable comedy, *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, is supposed to have been written by William Stevenson about 1560. Here the Latin model is still followed in formal particulars, but the main characters are manifestly studied from real sixteenth-century peasants, and the background of English village life is given with much vivid realism. *Gammer Gurton's Needle* is a great landmark in the history of the drama in England, for it shows that English comedy had been able to learn from classical models the lesson of clear construction and steady development of plot, without sacrificing that broad and realistic comic spirit which had found expression in the byplay of the Mysteries and Moralities, and which was shortly to come to flower in such masterpieces of pure English humor as Dekker's *Shoemakers'*

The Classical Influence: Comedy.

Holiday, and the tavern scenes in Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*

The Classical Influence: Tragedy.

Upon tragedy the classical influence was even greater, and the struggle on the part of the learned playwrights of the universities to impose the classical form upon English tragedy was more sustained. The classic dramatist selected for emulation was Seneca. Between 1560 and 1581 ten tragedies of Seneca were freely translated. Coming into the hands of English playwrights, just when they were eagerly but blindly feeling their way toward a national type of drama, these plays could not fail to impress them much, perhaps all the more because the Senecan tragedy was directly opposed to that kind of drama to which the English people naturally inclined. Seneca's plays have very little stage action; important events, instead of being directly represented, are merely reported on the stage, by messengers or others. The tendency of English tragedy, on the other hand, was from the first to present everything bodily on the stage, even the storming of cities, or battles between great armies, where the means at the disposal of the actors were laughably inadequate to the demand. Latin drama, again, is usually careful to preserve unity of time and place, that is, to make all the action pass in a given locality, and to cover no more than the events of a single day. English playwrights, on the contrary, had no hesitation in shifting the scene to half a dozen different countries in the course of a single play; and they thought nothing of introducing in the first act a child who grew to manhood in the second act, and in the third died and handed on the story, to be acted out by his sons in the fourth and fifth. Classic drama also drew a very sharp line between comedy and tragedy, admitting no comic element into a serious play. The English drama, on the contrary, from the miracle plays down, set comedy side

by side with tragedy; it mingled the farcical with the august, the laughable with the pathetic, as they actually are mingled in life.

Gorboduc.

The young university "wits" (as men of intellectual pretensions were then called), while they shared in the national enthusiasm for stage-plays, were many of them repelled by the crudities and absurdities of the native drama, emphasized as these were by the meagre stage-setting. They wished, therefore, to force the elegant but cold Senecan model upon the public. In 1562 two young gentlemen of the Inner Temple, Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, presented before Queen Elizabeth a play in blank verse called *Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex*, which was accepted as a kind of manifesto on the part of the classicists, and as an example of what could be done in handling a subject from British legend, on the lines laid down by Seneca. *Gorboduc* has a chorus, made up of four old men of Britain; messengers to report the action, almost all of which takes place off the stage; and long epic and lyric passages —what the French call *tirades*—to take the place of stage action. It is a stately production, and deserves veneration as the first regular tragedy written in English. That it had a great influence upon the native drama, just struggling into consciousness of itself, is evidenced by the continual efforts made by the playwrights of the next twenty or thirty years, to force their stubborn, overgrown material into some semblance of the neat classic form.

Effect of the Classical Influence.

In the end the native form won the day. It had on its side not only long tradition, but the overwhelming weight of popular taste. It was infinitely better suited to the robust imagination of the men of the English Renaissance, eager for excitement and craving strong sensations. Nevertheless, the apprenticeship of English playwrights to a foreign master, brief and incomplete

though it was, was invaluable. It taught them to impose some restraint upon the riot of their fancy; it showed them the beauty and artistic necessity of good structure; in a word, it brought form out of chaos. Nor did the influence wholly die, even when the battle had gone once for all in favor of the "romantic" drama. Marlowe, whose genius was intensely romantic, shows abundant traces of it; and the "Chorus" of *King Henry V*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Pericles*, is a slender remnant of the Senecan chorus. Ben Jonson, with a haughty disregard for popular applause, continued to wage a single-handed battle in favor of classicism, from the beginning of his career until twenty years after Shakespeare's death, when the Elizabethan drama was drawing near the end of its magnificent course.

The Great Dramatic Period.

We now stand on the threshold of that wonderful sixty years (1580–1640) during which this course was run. As has been shown in the last chapter, England found herself, at the beginning of this period, quickened by three of the most potent influences which can affect the life of a nation: wide-spread intellectual curiosity, the beginnings of an intense religious ferment, and the pride of suddenly discovered national strength. The young wits who came up from the universities to London, tingling with the imaginative excitement of the age, seized upon the popular theatre, crude though it then was, as promising to make possible a form of art concrete enough, flexible enough, exciting enough, to satisfy the life of the day with a reflection of its own diversity and splendor. The marvellously swift and many-sided dramatic development of the next thirty years (1580–1610) abundantly testifies to the sound instinct of the men who saw in the theatre the best instrument for the expression of their swarming fancies.

The Elizabethan drama has been called "the drama

of rhetoric," and from one point of view the description is exact. Not only were dramatists compelled by the meagre stage-setting to indulge in long passages of description and soliloquy, but also they loved rhetoric for its own sake, as did their audiences. Nothing is more curious to our modern ears than the endless quibble and word-play, the elaborate conceits, the sounding and far-fetched phrase, in which all the Elizabethan dramatists, and Shakespeare as much as any, delighted to clothe their thought. Lyly's *Euphues* (see page 84) had a marked influence upon the early Elizabethan drama, both for good and evil. The taste for artificial language which it reflected and fostered, filled the early drama with passages which are intolerably mannered; but, on the other hand, it refined poetic diction, and saved the drama from the rudeness by which a form of art so popular in its appeal and so humble in its origin was naturally threatened.

The Drama of Rhetoric.

As a dramatist Lyly occupies a peculiar position among Shakespeare's predecessors. He wrote, not for the regular dramatic companies, but for companies of child actors. These were choir-boys, one company attached to Saint Paul's Cathedral and known as the "Children of Paul's," the other attached to the Queen's chapel at Whitehall and known as the "Children of the Chapel Royal." To these child companies Lyly's tone and matter were admirably adapted. His plays are for the most part graceful adaptations of classic myths, so turned as to have a bearing upon some contemporary happening at court, yet moving always in an atmosphere of quaint and dream-like unreality. *Endymion* is an elaborate compliment to Queen Elizabeth, who appears in the play in the character of Cynthia, the virgin huntress. *The Woman in the Moon* is a veiled satire upon women in general, and Elizabeth in particular, written after Lyly had been soured by

Lyly and the Child Actors.

years of fruitless seeking after court favor. Through the plays are scattered delightful lyrics, which Lyly was perhaps especially tempted to insert by the clear voices of the child players.

The child actors for whom Lyly wrote, played at first exclusively in private—at court, or in the houses of the nobility. But the regular companies had already begun to establish themselves in the suburbs of London, and to erect permanent theatres. The first of these playhouses, known simply as "The Theatre," was built in Finsbury Fields, to the north of the city, by James Burbage, in 1576. It was at this playhouse that Shakespeare first found employment. Burbage's company, on the destruction of The Theatre, built the Globe, on the south bank of the Thames; and here, on the Bankside, other places of theatrical entertainment rapidly sprang up. Burbage built the Blackfriars as a winter theatre within the city limits. By the end of the century eleven theatres existed in the city and in the free lands or "liberties" adjoining.

The Regular Companies and Their Theatres.

Performances took place usually at three in the afternoon, and were announced by the hanging out of a flag and the blowing of trumpets. The theatres were round or octagonal structures, unroofed except for a shed or canopy over the stage. (The winter theatres, such as the Blackfriars, were entirely roofed in.) The stage extended out into the body of the house, was open on three sides, and was sufficiently elevated so that the main bulk of the audience, standing on the bare ground which formed the floor or pit of the theatre, could have a fair view. Persons who could afford to pay a higher price than the "groundlings" took advantage of the boxes built round the pit; and young gallants, for an extra fee, could have seats upon the stage itself, where they smoked their pipes,

Presentation of an Elizabethan Play.

peeled oranges, cracked nuts, and often interfered with the performance by chaffing a poor actor, or by flirting ostentatiously with the fair occupant of a neighboring box. In accordance with the luxurious taste of the age in dress, the costumes of the actors were often very rich. All women's parts were played by boys; actresses were not seen in England until after the Restoration. It was long thought that the Elizabethans were practically without stage-setting, a change of scene being indicated often merely by a placard, or by a roughly painted piece of pasteboard and a few stage properties. Although this view proves to have been exaggerated, it is true that the dramatist was compelled, to a far greater degree than at present, to rely upon vivid poetic expression as the chief means of stimulating the imagination of his audience and of preserving the dramatic illusion.

While Lyly was at the height of his vogue, during the late eighties of the sixteenth century, a group of young dramatists were coming to the front whose appeal was not to the court but to the people, and whose plays were written for the popular theatres just described. The most important of these dramatists were Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, and George Peele, with Marlowe the undisputed leader. The non-dramatic work of these men has already been mentioned (see pages 90 and 98). Greene was by natural gift a prose romancer, Peele a lyric poet, and at least half of Marlowe's genius was of an epic kind. But the tendency of the age was so overwhelmingly in favor of drama that all three, in common with many of their fellows, were diverted into the channel of dramatic expression; and Marlowe achieved in this not wholly sympathetic medium all but the highest distinction.

Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593), one of the most striking figures of the English Renaissance, is the true founder of the popular English drama, though he was

himself an outgrowth of the long period of preparation which we have been traversing. He was born in 1564, two months before Shakespeare, in the old cathedral town of Canterbury. His father was a shoemaker; the boy was sent to Cambridge by a patron, who had noticed his quick parts. He graduated at nineteen; and four years later (1587) he astonished London with his first play, *Tamburlaine*, which he brought out with the Lord Admiral's Men, the rival company to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, whom Shakespeare joined.

Christopher Marlowe.

In the brief and haughty prologue prefixed to *Tamburlaine*, Marlowe not only announced clearly the character of that play, but hinted at the programme which he proposed to carry out in the future:

His "Programme."

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother wits
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
> We'll lead you to the stately tents of war
> Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine
> Threatening the world with high astounding terms
> And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.

The "jigging veins of rhyming mother wits" is a sneer at the use of rhyme and awkward tumbling lines of fourteen syllables, which was customary with the popular playwrights of the time. For this "jigging vein" he proposes to substitute blank verse, which, though it had been employed since the example of Sackville and Norton, in *Gorboduc*, had not fully established itself. It is a sign of Marlowe's artistic insight that he should have recognized at once the value of blank verse for dramatic poetry; and we can see, beneath the surface of his words, a proud consciousness of his own power over this almost untried form of verse. Out of it he built that "mighty line" which astounded and fascinated his contemporaries; and his success with it fixed it firmly as the vehicle of seri-

ous drama henceforth. By his sneer at the "conceits" that "clownage keeps in pay," Marlowe showed his determination not to pander to the pit by means of vulgar comedy and horse-play, but to treat an elevated theme with seriousness. By the "stately tents of war," to which he promises to lead his hearer, he typified the dignity and largeness of scope which he proposed to give to all his work. By the last three lines of the prologue he foreshadowed his plan of giving unity to his dramas by making them revolve around some single great personality, engaged in some titanic struggle for power; and likewise of treating this struggle with the rhetorical splendor, the "high astounding terms," without which Elizabethan drama is now inconceivable. This programme he carried out in the main with consistency.

"Tamburlaine."

Tamburlaine is a pure "hero-play." The Scythian shepherd conquers, one after another, the kingdoms of the East, forcing kings to harness themselves to his chariot, and carrying with him a great cage in which a captive emperor is kept like a wild beast. The huge barbaric figure of Tamburlaine is always before our eyes, and the action of the play is only a series of his triumphs. His character, half-bestial, half-godlike in its remorseless strength and confidence, dominates the imagination like an elemental force of nature, and lends itself admirably to those "high astounding terms" which fill whole pages of the play with thunderous monologue.

"Doctor Faustus."

Marlowe's second work, *Doctor Faustus*, is also a hero-play, and is cast on even larger lines. It is a dramatized story of the life and death of a mediæval scholar, who sells his soul to the devil, in return for a life of power and pleasure. It embodied, in another form, the same aspiration after the unattainable which Tamburlaine had typified; and the story involved large questions of human will and fate,

such as an imagination like Marlowe's loves to grapple with. It can hardly be said that the poet lived up to the possibilities of his subject. The play, as it has come down to us, is disfigured by comic passages of a coarse and tasteless sort, those very "conceits of clownage" which Marlowe had formerly declared war against. But even where the workmanship is poor, there is always something imposing in the design; and certain passages have hardly been surpassed for power and beauty. When Mephistopheles raises from the dead the spirit of Helen of Troy, Faustus utters one rapturous exclamation:

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilion?

And at his death he starts up with the cry,

> Lo, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!—

three lines which would alone serve to stamp Marlowe as of the company of imperial poets.

"The Jew of Malta" and "Edward II."

Marlowe's third play, *The Jew of Malta*, is again a study of the lust of power—this time the power bestowed by great riches. Barabbas, the old Jewish merchant of Malta, is the first vigorous sketch of which Shakespeare was to make in Shylock a finished masterpiece. The first two acts are conceived on a large scale, and carefully worked out; but after these Marlowe seems again to have fallen from his own ideal, and to have worked hastily and insincerely. Raw horrors accumulate on horror's head, and the play degenerates into melodrama of the goriest kind. Nevertheless, it shows a remarkable advance over *Tamburlaine* and *Doctor Faustus*, in the knitting together of cause and effect. Marlowe's growth in dramatic technic is still more strikingly apparent in his last play, *Edward II*. This is unquestionably his mas-

terpiece, so far as play-making goes, though for the very reason that it discards rhetorical monologue for the rapid dramatic interchange of thought, it contains fewer quotable passages of pure poetry than any of the others. *Edward II* is an example of a form of drama which became very popular—the chronicle history. It served as a kind of text-book for a nation curious as to its past, and seeking therein lessons for its future guidance. One of the dangers most present to the mind of Englishmen of the sixteenth century was that of civil war; one of the themes most constantly fascinating to the Renaissance mind was that of man highly placed in power, suddenly thrust down to misery and death. To these two facts we can attribute the interest of Marlowe and later of Shakespeare in the reigns of Edward II, Richard II, Henry VI, and Richard III.

Marlowe was killed in 1593, at the age of twenty-nine. There is something in the meteor-like suddenness of his appearance in the skies of poetry, and in the swift flaming of his genius through its course, that seems to make inevitable his violent end. He sums up for us the Renaissance passion for life, sleepless in its search and daring in its grasp after the infinite in power, in knowledge, and in pleasure.

Thomas Kyd.

A dramatist of whom little is known, but who is important as representing a type of drama which had great influence, is Thomas Kyd. His plays *Jeronimo* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, acted about 1592, are examples of what came to be called "the tragedy of blood." They constitute a sort of double play, in the first part of which the hero is slain, but in the second part returns to inspire the revenge which ultimately results in the death of nearly all the other characters. Traces of this type of play may be seen in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Julius Cæsar*. The appetite for crude bloodshed was persistent in Elizabethan

audiences, and popular dramatists, in gratifying them, seem to have had a certain effrontery in defying the conventions of the classical drama in which untoward events take place off the stage.

Robert Greene was probably encouraged to write for the stage by Marlowe's success with *Tamburlaine*. Greene's best plays are *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and *James IV*. The first of these has some country scenes, grouped about the character of Margaret, the fair maid of Fressingfield, which are in a fine healthy English tone. *James IV* has a clear and coherent development, unusual at this stage of the drama; one of its motifs, that of the persecuted woman who flees to the forest in the disguise of a page, was destined to become immensely popular in the later romantic drama, and to be used over and over again, with endless variations, by Shakespeare and Fletcher.

Robert Greene.

George Peele, like Greene, began his career by non-dramatic writing. His most characteristic early work consists of poems written for ceremonial occasions. One of these, "A Farewell to the Famous and Fortunate Generals of our English Forces," written on the departure of Drake and Norris, on the expedition to Portugal in 1589, is full of the new national spirit. Some of the lines have a superb ring of exultation and pride:

George Peele.

> You fight for Christ and England's peerless queen,
> Elizabeth the wonder of the world,
> Over whose throne the enemies of God
> Have thundered
> O ten times treble happy men, that fight
> Under the cross of Christ and England's queen!

This passage well illustrates Peele's peculiar gift as a poet, that of making his lines *kindle* as they go. His best play, *David and Bethsabe*, is, considered merely as a

play, poor enough; but it is full of passages, usually only a few lines long, which seem to take fire before a reader's eyes, and to burn with the softest yet most intense flame of the imagination. *David and Bethsabe* may be regarded as a late type of the mystery play, stripped of its sacred significance, and saturated with the sensuous grace and rich color of the Renaissance. Another play of Peele's, *The Old Wives' Tale*, is notable as having furnished Milton with the groundwork of *Comus*. It is a very crude but a very charming play; a sort of dramatized nursery-tale of giants, bewitched maidens, buried lamps, and magic wells, put forth with the occasional poetic grace and the aimless dreamy digression proper to the species.

Peele was out of place in drama, and never succeeded in writing a really good play. But his contribution to the development of dramatic style was nevertheless great. He succeeded in keeping much of the strength of Marlowe's "mighty line," while infusing into it a new tenderness and soft play of color. If Marlowe furnished the strength, Peele as surely furnished the sweetness, which went to make up the incomparable blend of Elizabethan drama at its great moment.

CHAPTER VI

THE RENAISSANCE: SHAKESPEARE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born on or about the 23d of April, 1564, in the village of Stratford. He was the third child of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden. His mother was of gentle blood, and was possessed of some wealth by inheritance. His father, though a man of consideration in the village, was of lower station, a dealer in various goods—corn, wool, meat, and leather. Until the age of fourteen the boy attended the Stratford grammar-school, where he picked up the "small Latin and less Greek," to which his immensely learned friend Ben Jonson rather scornfully refers. The better part of his education, a wonderfully deep and sure insight into nature, and a wide acquaintance with the folk-lore of his native district, he doubtless began to acquire in boyhood, by rambles through the meadows and along the streams of Warwickshire, stopping to chat with old crones over their cottage fires, or to listen to plowmen as they took their nooning. Only a few miles away was the picturesque town of Warwick, with its magnificent castle, to set him dreaming of the past. Within an easy day's walk lay Kenilworth Castle, the seat of Elizabeth's favorite, Leicester; and the historic town of Coventry, where one might still see mystery plays performed on certain festival days. Travelling companies of actors visited Stratford two or three times a year, and had to apply to Shakespeare's father for leave to play. At their performances young Shakespeare was doubtless sometimes present, drinking

Shakespeare's Early Life.

in his first impressions of the fascinating world of the stage. In these and other ways his mind found the food it needed; and stored up many a brave image, which it should afterward evoke in the thick air of a crowded London theatre.

About 1578 the fortunes of his father began to decline, and Shakespeare was withdrawn from school. In spite of the rapidly failing prosperity of the family, he was married at eighteen to Ann Hathaway, a young woman eight years his senior, the daughter of a peasant family of Shottery, near Stratford. That the marriage was hasty and unfortunate has been conjectured from the general course of Shakespeare's life, as well as from various passages in the plays, which seem to have an autobiographic color. Certain it is that some time between 1585 and 1587 he left Stratford to seek his fortune in the capital, and that until the later years of his life he returned to his native town only at rare intervals. The immediate cause of his leaving is said by doubtful tradition to have been the anger of Sir Thomas Lucy, a local magnate, over a deer-stealing prank in which Shakespeare and other wild young blades of the village had engaged.

Shakespeare's Marriage.

Outside the walls of London to the north, not far from where the road from Shakespeare's country entered the purlieus of the capital, stood the oldest of the London playhouses, called simply The Theatre. It had at the head of its company the famous actor James Burbage. Whether from accident or set intention, Shakespeare soon found himself connected with Burbage's company, where he made himself indispensable as actor and as retoucher of old plays. He continued with Burbage's company, as actor, playwright, and stockholder, when The Theatre was pulled down, and rebuilt as the Globe on the south bank of the Thames.

Shakespeare in London.

Of the external facts of Shakespeare's life in London we

know few, and those few of small importance. We know of his friendship with the Earl of Southampton; of his friendly rivalry, in art and talk, with "rare Ben Jonson," the second dramatist of the age; of his careful conduct of his business affairs, and of his popularity as a playwright. Except for these few gleams of light, his external life is wrapped in mystery; and the very breadth and dramatic greatness of his plays prevent us from drawing any but the broadest inferences concerning his personal history.

His Return to Stratford; his Death.

The foundation of Shakespeare's modest fortune is thought to have been laid by a gift from his friend and patron, the young Earl of Southampton, to whom he dedicated his youthful poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece;* but it was mainly by his earnings at the Globe and Blackfriars theatres that he was able to reinstate his parents in their old position of burgherly comfort, and to gain for himself a patent of gentility and the possession of the best homestead in his native village, with broad acres of land to add to its dignity. Hither, at the age of fifty, he retired, to spend the remainder of his life in country quietude, with his wife and his unmarried daughter, Judith. He died in 1616, at the age of fifty-two; and was buried in the old church by the Avon, where thousands of pilgrims now go each year to read the words on his tomb, beseeching men to let his dust lie quiet in its grave.

The Dates of Shakespeare's Plays.

The exact dates of production of Shakespeare's plays are often uncertain. The publication followed sometimes by years the first appearance on the stage, and only sixteen of the thirty-seven were published in Shakespeare's lifetime. Sometimes there is external evidence in the form of a reference to the play in some contemporary document, or a reference in the text of the play to some contemporary event or publication. There are certain peculiarities in Shakespeare's style which tend to indicate the period of

the work. For example, Shakespeare used rhyme much more freely in his earlier plays, and his blank verse was much more rigid. In his later plays he allows the thought to run on from one line to the next, and often concludes lines with small, unemphatic words, or admits extra syllables. From these various indications it is possible to make out the chronology of Shakespeare's plays with approximate accuracy. Most critics divide his work into four periods: the first of experiment and external influence (1590–1594); the second of mature power in comedy and history plays (1595–1601); the third of satire and tragedy (1601–1609), and the fourth of romance (1609–1611).

The First Period.

Shakespeare probably began his dramatic work, as has been said, by retouching old plays. The three parts of *Henry VI* remain as an interesting specimen of his efforts in this direction. They also show so clearly the influence of Marlowe that it has been conjectured that he and Shakespeare worked together on the revision of the original plays. At all events, when Shakespeare essayed a history play of his own, in *Richard III*, he produced a portrait of elemental energy and evil pride which the creator of *Tamburlaine* and *Faust* might have mistaken for his own handiwork. Another early play, *Titus Andronicus*, is written in a strain of raw horror calculated to outdo Marlowe at his hardest and cruellest, but Shakespeare's part in this crude melodrama is uncertain. Before this, however, he had made other experiments in quite different manners. His earliest comedy, *Love's Labour's Lost*, sprang from his interest in the fanciful, artificial language to which Lyly's *Euphues* had given a tremendous vogue at Elizabeth's court and among all the young fashionables of London. The characters represent contemporary types in a style of rhetorical burlesque. Shakespeare's next play, the *Comedy of Errors*, was an experiment in still another

direction. It is an adaptation of a Latin comedy, the *Menæchmi* of Plautus. The farcical plot turns upon the resemblance of twin brothers, in whose service are two clownish servants, also counterparts of each other. Shakespeare handles the intrigue with a skill which shows how rapidly he was growing in stage technic. Instead of following up his success in this kind, however, he turned immediately to try a new experiment, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. This is a dramatized romance, adapted freely from one of the popular "novels" or love-romances of his day. The play, thin and youthful as it is, has more than a touch of real Shakespearian grace. The scene (Act II, sc. III) in which Launce, the clown, upbraids his dog for not joining in the family distress at his departure, is a piece of glorious nonsense; and the famous lyric, "Who is Silvia?" is the first of many exquisite songs which carry the spirit of the plays into the realm of music.

Earliest Masterpieces.

Shakespeare had now made rapid experiments in four directions: in *Henry VI* he had essayed the chronicle or history play, in *Love's Labour's Lost* the "conversation play," in the *Comedy of Errors* the classical comedy, and in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* the romance. He brought this first period of his work to a close with two more efforts, wholly different in kind from the preceding and from each other. These also are experimental, in the sense that they enter realms before unknown to drama; but both in conception and execution they are finished masterpieces. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet* show that in several directions Shakespeare had now passed beyond his apprentice state, and had attained the rank of master craftsman. The first of these plays is thought to have been written in 1594; the second, though it did not receive its final form until 1596 or 1597, was probably produced about the same time.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is thought to have been written for some nobleman's marriage-festival, to take the place of the masque or allegorical pageant traditional upon such occasions. Theseus, Duke of Athens, and his bride Hippolyta, in whose lofty figures the noble bridal pair are perhaps shadowed forth, represent the sentiment of love in its serene and lofty mood. About this central pair revolve three other groups, representing love in its fanciful and burlesque aspects. The first group is made up of the Athenian youths and maidens astray in the moonlight woods, loving at cross-purposes, and played upon by Puck with a magic liquor, which adds confusion to confusion in their hearts. The second group consists of the fairy Queen Titania and her lord Oberon; and here the treatment of the love-theme becomes deliciously satiric, as it depicts the passion of the dainty Queen for Bully Bottom, with the ass's head. In the third group, that of the journeymen actors who present the "tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe: very tragical mirth," the love-theme is modulated into the most absurd burlesque. Then, poured over all, holding these diverse elements in unity, is the atmosphere of midsummer moonlight, and the aerial poetry of the fairy world.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream."

A Midsummer Night's Dream, like the plays which preceded it, treats of love in a light and fanciful way, never more than half in earnest and usually frankly trivial. In *Romeo and Juliet* love ceases to be a mere sentiment, to be played with and jested over; it becomes a passion, tragical with the issues of life and death. Here for the first time Shakespeare was really in earnest. The two young lives are caught in a fiery whirlwind, which sweeps them through the rapturous hours of their new love, to their death together in the tomb of Juliet's ancestors. The action, instead of

"Romeo and Juliet."

being spread over months, as in the poem from which Shakespeare took the plot, is crowded into five days; and from the first meeting of the lovers until the end a sense of hurry, now ecstatic, now desperate, keeps the passion mounting in a swift crescendo. Not only is the play great as a "tragedy of fate" in the Greek sense, but in the drawing of character the poet now for the first time works with unerring deftness and power. The vulgar, kind-hearted nurse, the witty, hare-brained Mercutio, the vacillating yet stubborn Capulet, the lovers themselves, so sharply differentiated in the manner of their love, all these and a dozen minor figures have the very hue and gesture of life.

Shakespeare's Poems.

To this first period of production belong also Shakespeare's two longest poems, *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), both of which were dedicated to his patron, the young Earl of Southampton. They are both characteristic productions of the Renaissance, classical stories treated with an extravagant richness of decorative detail and a frank sensuousness for which Marlowe in *Hero and Leander* had given the model.

The Second Period.

Shakespeare's second period is marked by the success with which he threw into dramatic form the rough masses of English history which he found in the chronicle of Holinshed. In *Richard II* he returned to the subject of the dispute for the crown among the descendants of Edward III, and followed with three plays which contain some of his most remarkable work. These are *Henry IV* (in two parts) and *Henry V*.

In planning *Henry IV*, Shakespeare followed the earlier chronicle plays by interspersing the somewhat dry historic matter with scenes from the London tavern life of his own day — a life full of racy humors fitted to afford the desired comic relief. As the *genius loci* of the tavern

world, he created Falstaff, the fat old knight who helps Prince Hal (afterward King Henry V) to sow his wild oats. The immortal figure of Falstaff holds the prime place among the creations of Shakespeare's humor, as royally as Hamlet holds his "intellectual throne." In *Henry V* we see Shakespeare in a new and very engaging light; it is, indeed, hardly a figure of speech to say that we *see* the poet, for in this play, as nowhere else in his dramas, does he speak with the voice of personal enthusiasm. The manly, open character of the King, and his splendid victories over the French, made him a kind of symbol of England's greatness, both in character and in achievement. The poet transfers to the battle of Agincourt the national pride which had been kindled by the defeat of the Armada; and makes his play a great pæan of praise for the island-kingdom. In the "choruses" introducing the several acts, and even in the speeches of the characters themselves, he utters in lyric strophes an overwhelming patriotic emotion.

"Henry IV and "Henry V."

The schooling through which Shakespeare put himself in writing the English historical plays was arduous. He had to teach to the populace of his time the history of their country; it was therefore incumbent upon him to use the material without gross falsification, and at the same time to give it life and artistic form. To do this in the strictest of all forms, the drama, and with the meagre resources of the Elizabethan stage, was a task which strengthened his art for the work he had still to do; especially for the four great tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*, which mark the height of his achievement.

Effect of English Historical Plays in Strengthening Shakespeare's Art.

A further advance in Shakespeare's technical mastery is seen in *Julius Cæsar*, which was first acted in 1599. This play, falling in point of time between the "histo-

ries" and the tragedies, partakes of the character of both. While Shakespeare keeps faithfully, even in details, to the story of the assassination of Cæsar and subsequent events, as he found it in Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch (1579), he gives to his material a large and vigorous direction of the dramatic action as a whole. The play might properly be called the tragedy of Brutus, since it closes with his death. On the other hand, even after the death of Cæsar in the third act, his spirit continues to animate the action, in the speech in which Antony calls on the very stones of Rome to rise and mutiny, in the apparition of the spectre which accosts Brutus in his tent, and in the fulfilment of its threat at Philippi. There are, indeed, two tragic figures in the piece—Cæsar, like Lear, conniving at his own ruin, but returning in the might of his indomitable personality to complete his work of subjugating the world; Brutus, like Hamlet, the instrument of a cause which he follows relentlessly through doubts, hesitations, public mistakes, and private griefs, until he is overwhelmed by forces which his own act has set in motion.

"Julius Cæsar."

While writing the histories, Shakespeare had found time to write the tragi-comedy *The Merchant of Venice*, and two brisk farces, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The last, said to have been written at the request of Queen Elizabeth, who desired to see Falstaff in love, is a hasty and rather perfunctory piece of work, written mostly in prose. It is quite otherwise with the first-mentioned play. In *The Merchant of Venice* we see for the first time the presiding presence of the moral sense, and a fundamental seriousness, betraying itself even in the deeper and more religious harmonies of the verse, which mark the poet's advance over the *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Shylock was prob-

"The Merchant of Venice."

ably suggested by Barabbas in *The Jew of Malta*, but serves to show how far Shakespeare had transcended Marlowe's influence. In Portia Shakespeare drew his second great portrait of a woman. She is an elder sister of Juliet, less vehement, with a larger experience of life, a stronger and more practised intellect.

The "Joyous Comedies."

In the three comedies which followed, written between 1598 and 1601, he drew three other unforgettable female portraits, Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, and Viola in *Twelfth Night*. And, grouped around them, what a holiday company of delightful figures!—Benedick, "the married man," trying in vain to parry the thrusts of Beatrice's nimble wit; the philosophical Touchstone, shaking his head over the country wench Audrey, because the gods have not made her poetical; the meditative Jacques (a first faint sketch, it has been said, of Hamlet), with his melancholy "compounded of many simples"; Sir Toby Belch, champion of the ancient doctrine of cakes and ale, and ginger hot in the mouth; the unspeakable Sir Andrew Aguecheek; the solemn prig and egotist Malvolio, smirking and pointing at his cross-garters; Maria, "youngest wren of nine"; and the clown Feste, with his marvellous haunting songs. All these and dozens more move here in a kaleidoscope of intense life, spiritualized by an indescribable poetic radiance.

The Sonnets.

To the same period probably belong most of the sonnets which were published in 1609, but to which a reference was made in 1598. In regard to their biographical significance there has been much the same sort of discussion as that attracted by Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*. There is, however, this difference, that while the latter tells a straightforward story, whether true or not, Shakespeare's sonnets are addressed to several persons, and it is by no means certain that they make two, or even more, continuous sequences. They

represent in part a relation of the poet to two persons, "a man right fair," and "a woman colored ill," a relation marked by passion, jealousy, betrayal. Like Sidney's sonnets, they show much of the artificial language of the professional sonneteer, mingled with touches of such penetrating truth to human nature that they seem incontestably the result of personal experience. Whatever their relation to the facts of Shakespeare's outward life, they embody the emotion and reflection of his inner world, expressed in lines of passionate pleading or protest, and again of grave, philosophic eloquence.

The Third Period.

It was for long the fashion to suppose that some time about 1601 Shakespeare passed from a happy, care-free, idyllic existence, typified by *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*, into a period of sorrow and gloom, expressed in the bitter, cynical comedies, *Measure for Measure* and *Troilus and Cressida*, and the great tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*. It was even plausibly suggested that the mysterious influence of the Dark Lady of the sonnets was the cause of this change. It is clear at present that no such personal explanation is necessary for the change in the spirit of Shakespeare's work. A growing taste for satire and tragedy on the part of the playgoing public in the early years of the seventeenth century brought about similar alterations in the work of the other dramatists. The difference between the tone of the two periods, however, is so marked as to make the division a useful one.

The "Dark and Bitter Comedies."

The note of the new period is struck by the comedies. In *Troilus and Cressida* Shakespeare drew a picture of faithlessness in love, a picture so cynical, so fierce in its bitterness, that it is almost impossible to think of it as the work of the hand which drew Juliet, Portia, and Rosalind. In *All's Well That Ends Well* he told in dramatic form a story from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, a typical bit of Italian

Renaissance fiction showing how a woman by adroitness and enterprise—in short, by that supreme human force which the Italians called *virtu*—makes herself mistress of the person and then of the love of her husband. It is to be credited to Shakespeare's skill that the strong-minded heroine, Helena, has throughout the sympathy of the audience. In *Measure for Measure* Shakespeare struck at the hypocrisy of a man high-placed in office and posing as a severe moralist, who nevertheless yields to the very sin he punishes most ruthlessly in others.

"Hamlet."

In *Hamlet*, the first of the four great tragedies which form the "captain jewels in the carcanet" of the master's work, we have the spectacle of a sensitive and highly intellectual youth, endowed with all the gifts which make for greatness of living, suddenly confronted with the knowledge that his father has been murdered, and that his mother has married the murderer. Even before the revelation comes, Hamlet feels himself to be living in an alien moral world, and is haunted by dark misgivings. When his father's ghost appears to him, with its imperative injunction to revenge, Hamlet takes his resolution instantly. His feigned madness, an element of the drama retained by Shakespeare from the old story whence he drew the plot, is the first device which Hamlet hits upon to aid him in his dangerous duty. In spite of the endless debate concerning the reality of Hamlet's madness, there is no room for question in the matter. Not only is he perfectly sane, but his handling of the difficult situation in which he finds himself is in all points swift and masterful. He gives up his love for Ophelia because he cannot take her with him into the dark pass which he is compelled to enter; and the scathing satire which he pours out upon her when he fancies her in league with Polonius and the King to play the spy upon him, gathers its force from the greatness of the renunciation he has made. His scheme for proving the King's

guilt beyond a peradventure, by means of the strolling players, is consummated with ingenious skill. His dealings with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are those of a gifted man of action, to whose resolute will thought is a swift minister. His purpose is always firm; and it is one of the ironies of circumstance that Hamlet has come to stand in most minds for a type of irresolution. This misunderstanding of the character is largely due to the exaltation of excitement in Hamlet, which causes his mind, even in the moment when he is pursuing his purpose with most intentness, to play with feverish brilliancy over the questions of man's life and death; which makes his throbbing, white-hot imagination a meeting-place for grotesque and extravagant fancies; and which leads him, so to speak, to cover the solid framework of his enterprise with a wild festoonery of intellectual whim, to envelop it in fitful eloquence, swift and subtle wit, contemptuous irony, and mordant satire. Yet this is merely the by-play of his mind, the volatilized substance which escapes under the heat of excitement. In the midst of it he remains perfectly master of himself and of his means, a supremely rational, competent, and determined being, a prince and master of men, dedicated irrevocably to ruin in the moral chaos where the "cursed spite" of his destiny has thrown him. With a miraculous art Shakespeare has depicted this character, not fixed in outline, but changing and palpitant as life itself; so that it constantly eludes our definition, and seems forever passing from one state of being into another, in the passion of its struggle.

"Othello."

Othello has a certain affinity to *Hamlet* in that here also the hero's soul is thrown into violent perturbation by the discovery of evil poisoning the very sources of his life. In Othello's case the pathos and the tragedy are heightened by the fact that the evil exists only in the hero's imagination, into which we see the demon-like Iago pouring, drop by drop, the

poison of suspicion. Othello is not by nature jealous; he everywhere shows himself "of an open and free nature," incapable of petty suspicion. But when Iago, working cautiously, with diabolic skill, has at last convinced him that Desdemona is false, the fatal rage which seizes him is a hysterical reaction from the sickening blow of disillusion. The real centre of gravity in the play is Iago, with his "honest" manners, his blunt speech, his downright materialistic philosophy, his plausible zeal in his master's service; underneath all of which his real nature lies coiled like a snake, waiting for a chance to sting.

"King Lear."

King Lear is often put at the apex of Shakespeare's achievement, and by many judges at the head of the dramatic literature of the world. The story was as old as Geoffrey of Monmouth (see page 29), and, like so many of the themes which Shakespeare handled, had already been made the subject of a play, a crude effort by some nameless playwright during the experimental stage of Elizabethan drama. Here, as was his constant custom, Shakespeare followed the main lines of the story given him, and incorporated into his grand edifice every bit of usable material from the building of his predecessor. Here, too, as always in Shakespeare, if we pierce to the core of his meaning, the real tragedy is a spiritual one. Lear is an imperious nature, wayward by temperament, and made more incapable of self-government by long indulgence of his passionate whims. At the opening of the play we see him striving to find a refuge from himself by surrendering all his wealth and power in exchange for absolute love. The heart of the old King demands love; love is the element upon which it subsists, and age, instead of abating this hunger, has made the craving more imperious. He demands love not only in the spirit but in the letter, and thrusts his youngest daughter, Cordelia, from him with

cruel brusqueness, when she refuses to use the terms of extravagant hyperbole to describe her affection. Shakespeare has made this same brusque and hasty spirit of the King precipitate upon his old head the enmity of his remaining daughters, Goneril and Regan. Before he has recovered from the shock of Cordelia's defection, this awful pair of daughters lay bare, little by little, their monstrous souls to their father's gaze. As in *Othello*, the result of the revelation is to unhinge for the sufferer the very order of nature. As if in sympathy with the chaos in Lear's soul, the elements break loose; and in the pauses of the blast we hear the noise of violent crimes, curses, heart-broken jesting, the chatter of idiocy, and the wandering tongue of madness. The sentimentalist's phrase, "poetic justice," has no meaning for Shakespeare. The ruin wrought in the old King's heart and brain is irreparable, and the tornado which whirls him to his doom carries with it the just and the unjust. The little golden pause of peace, when Lear and Cordelia are united, is followed by the intolerably piercing scene in which he bears her dead body out of the prison, muttering that they have hanged his "poor fool." The consequences of rash action, heartlessly taken advantage of, were never followed out to a grimmer end.

"Macbeth."

In *Macbeth* Shakespeare depicted the passion of ambition working in a nature morally weak, but endowed with an intense poetic susceptibility. Macbeth is a dreamer and a sentimentalist, capable of conceiving vividly the goal of his evil desires, but incapable either of resolute action in attaining them or of a ruthless enjoyment of them when attained. By the murder of the King, Macbeth is plunged into a series of crimes, in which he persists with a kind of faltering desperation, until he falls before the accumulated vengeance, material and ghostly, raised up to punish him. As in *Antony and Cleopatra* we are shown the slow degenera-

tion of the hero's character under the slavery of sense, so here we behold the break-up of a soul under the torture of its own sick imagination. The ghost of Banquo, shaking its gory locks at Macbeth from its seat at the banquet table, is a symbol of the spiritual distemper which results from the working of a tyrannous imagination upon a nature morally unprovided. The witch-hags who meet Macbeth on the heath are concrete embodiments of the powers of evil, summoned from the four corners of the air by affinity with the evil heart of the schemer. Shakespeare did not, of course, consciously strive after symbolism in these things. It does not seem impossible, indeed, that he believed in ghosts and witches, as did the great mass of men in his day, from King James down. It is certain that he was interested in his story, here and elsewhere, as a piece of life rather than as a moral symbol; his work is full of types and symbols simply because life itself is full of them.

Beside Macbeth Shakespeare has placed a woman who possesses all the masculine qualities which the hero lacks, but who is nevertheless intensely feminine in her devotion to her lord's interest, and in her inability to endure the strain of a criminal life after his support has been withdrawn from her. Her will, though majestic when in the prosperous service of her husband's ambition, collapses in sudden ruin when he fails to rise to the responsibilities of their grim situation. Macbeth's feebler moral substance crumbles piecemeal; but the firm structure of his wife's spirit, as soon as its natural foundation is destroyed, falls by instant overthrow.

Later Roman Plays.

Toward the conclusion of this period Shakespeare turned again to Roman history for subject-matter, treating it with the tragic force and the satiric contempt that characterize the plays already discussed. In *Antony and Cleopatra* he showed the character of a great Roman general, crumbling

before the breath of Eastern luxury and sensuality, personified in Cleopatra, the "worm of old Nile." In *Coriolanus* he poured out his scorn for the "mob," the fickle, many-headed multitude, played upon by demagogues, and working its own destruction in its hatred of those who refuse to flatter and amuse it.

Timon and Pericles.

In two of the later plays of this period Shakespeare reverted to his early practice of working in collaboration. One of these, *Timon of Athens*, is thoroughly in the mood of this period, a kind of summing up of the pessimistic view of life in the person of Timon, the misanthrope, the character which constitutes Shakespeare's contribution to the play. The other play written in collaboration, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, anticipates in a measure the romantic character of Shakespeare's last work. The success of this piece, indeed, announced the rather general revival of romance on the London stage which succeeded the vogue of tragedy and satire.

Plays of the Fourth Period.

The plays which mark the closing period of Shakespeare's life are pure romances, conceived in a spirit of deep and lovely serenity, and characterized by a silvery delicacy, a tender musing touch, which is new in the poet's work. The first of the plays of the last period is *Cymbeline*, with its exquisite picture of Imogen and the woodland scenes between Arviragus and the young princes. Then followed *A Winter's Tale*, based upon Robert Greene's *Pandosto*—which, like Lodge's *Rosalynde*, had in part an Arcadian background. The wooing of Prince Florizel and Perdita has come, like the scenes in the Forest of Arden, to represent the very soul of pastoral romance. But the supreme exercise of the magic power of the master is seen in *The Tempest*. The background of the play was suggested by the wrecking of a vessel bound for Virginia, on the Bermudas, as narrated in *A Discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise called the Isle of*

Divels (1610), and numerous other pamphlets. Thus Shakespeare had the greatest stimulus to the imagination of the age, the appeal of the new world beyond the sea, to work with. And to meet the possibilities of his theme he summoned all his powers: the grace that had created the fairy world of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the lyric passion that had breathed through Juliet's lips on her bridal morning, the drollery and wit that had set the laughter of centuries billowing about Falstaff, the titanic might that had sent a world crashing on the head of Lear—all meet together here, but curbed, softened, silvered down into exquisite harmony.

The Tempest was one of the plays acted at the wedding of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, to Frederick, Elector Palatine, in 1613, and was long thought to have been written for that occasion. While it was probably written a little earlier, and was followed by *Henry VIII* —a chronicle play in which Shakespeare collaborated with Fletcher—it may in a true sense be called Shakespeare's farewell to his art. When scarcely fifty years of age, with his genius at its ripest, and every faculty of his mind in full play, he laid down his pen forever—as Prospero, at the end, abjures his magic, breaks his wand, and drowns his book "deeper than did ever plummet sound." One is tempted to indulge the fanciful parallel still further, and to think of Ariel, the delicate and potent sprite whom Prospero sets free, as the spirit of Imagination, now released from its long labors in the master's service.

Appreciation of Shakespeare in His Day.

The common opinion that Shakespeare was unappreciated by his own generation is only partly true. If other evidence were lacking to prove the esteem in which he was held, his material prosperity would be sufficient to show at least his high popularity with the theatre-going public. But there is witness that his genius was in tolerable measure recognized. His great antitype and rival, Ben Jonson, whose burly good sense was not prone to exag-

geration, and who perhaps never quite conquered a feeling of jealousy toward Shakespeare, wrote for the first collective edition of the plays, published in 1623, a eulogy full of deep, in places even passionate, admiration; and afterward said of him in a passage of moving sincerity: "I did love and honor him, on this side idolatry, as much as any." The most significant hint we have of his personal charm is in the adjective which is constantly applied to him by his friends, "gentle," a word also often used to describe his art, in allusion evidently to its humanity and poetic grace.

His Carelessness of Fame.

The awe inspired by the almost unearthly power and richness of Shakespeare's mind is apt to be deepened by the knowledge that the noble plays to which English-speaking races point as their greatest single achievement, were thrown into the world carelessly, and would have perished altogether if the author of them had had his way. During his lifetime they were printed only in cheap quartos, often pirated, the copy taken down by shorthand from the lips of the players, or patched up from prompters' manuscripts dishonestly acquired. He does not mention his plays in his will. Not until seven years after his death did a collective edition appear (known as the First Folio), and then only because of the piety of two of his actor-friends. There are reasons for this apparent neglect. The printing of a play while it was still actable was disadvantageous to the company whose property it was; and Shakespeare had probably made over his plays to his company as they were produced. Notwithstanding, when all this is taken into consideration, we are yet filled with astonishment. We see in the working of the master's spirit not only the vast liberality but the startling carelessness of nature, who seems with infinite loving pains to create her marvels, and then to turn listlessly away while they are given over to destruction.

CHAPTER VII

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: SHAKESPEARE'S CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS IN THE DRAMA

In the preceding chapter we regarded Shakespeare as standing alone, in order that by isolating his work we might better see its absolute qualities. We must now turn to those playwrights who worked at the same time and in many cases side by side with him, and try to get some notion of the wonderful variety of the drama during its period of full bloom. And we must trace briefly the steps by which the drama declined, both by inner decay and outward opposition, until, in 1642, at the beginning of the great Civil War, the doors of the theatres were closed, not to open again until the Restoration, eighteen years later.

The most commanding figure in the group of Shakespeare's dramatic contemporaries is Ben Jonson (1573–1637). Although brought up in humble surroundings—his stepfather was a bricklayer—he was sent to Westminster School and possibly to Cambridge; and he ultimately became one of the most learned men of his time. As a young man he went upon one campaign with the English army in Flanders, where (as he afterward boasted) he fought a duel with a champion of the enemy in the sight of both armies, and took from him his arms, in the classic manner. The incident is highly characteristic of Jonson's rugged and domineering character. As he served the Flemish soldier, he afterward served the luckless poets and poetasters who challenged him to a war of words.

Ben Jonson.

After returning to England, he began to work for the theatres. His first important play was *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), in which Shakespeare is known to have acted. He engaged in a series of literary quarrels, in the course of which he wrote several elaborate plays, *Cynthia's Revels*, *The Poetaster*, etc., to revenge himself upon his rather puny enemies. His four masterpieces appeared between 1605 and 1614. They are *The Silent Woman*, *Volpone*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*—all called comedies by him, though the second is a gloomy and biting satire, and the last a pure farce. He also wrote two massive tragedies taken from Roman history, *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. For many years after his appointment by James I as poet-laureate, he supplied the King with court-masques, little spectacle plays delicate in fancy and rich in lyric tracery, which were acted at Whitehall by gorgeously costumed lords and ladies, amid magnificent stage-settings contrived by the King's architect, Inigo Jones, with the lyrics set to music by the King's musician, Ferrabosco.

Jonson's Classicism.

Jonson came to the front as a dramatist at a time when one set of tendencies in the Renaissance, *i. e.*, those in the direction of imitation of the classics, were asserting themselves strongly against the practice of unlimited individualism and freedom in art which we call romantic. Sidney had already shown his scorn of plays on the native English model, and he was followed by a group of poets and critics who attacked all forms of romantic literature in satires and epistles, written in imitation of the Latin poets. By the beginning of the century this reaction had gone so far that, as we have seen, Shakespeare was probably influenced by it to desert chronicle history and romantic comedy for tragedy and satire. Jonson shows this movement in the drama. He took up the line of development which had been begun in *Gorboduc*, *Ralph Roister Doister*,

and other plays written under the influence of Seneca and Plautus. The classical reaction was short-lived, and the romantic temper reasserted itself, as we see in the later plays of Shakespeare, but Jonson refused to bend. He fought all his life long a battle against what he judged to be the ignorant preference of the public for the romantic form. Not only did he stand out for the classical "unities" (see page 112), but he made war upon the fantastic and extravagant qualities of romantic imagination, and labored to supplant them by classical sanity and restraint.

Jonson's Realism.

In one respect at least the classical quality of Jonson's comedies gave them an interest that is permanent, and an influence that was far-reaching. One difference between the romantic spirit and the classic is that the former tends toward escape from the actual conditions of life, while the latter tends to work realistically within them. This appears when we compare *Twelfth Night* or *The Tempest* with *Every Man in His Humour*. The former are full of glancing imagination and irresponsible fancy; the latter moves in the hard light of every-day London. This realism, the vivid picture of London life, makes Jonson's comedies among the most interesting plays of the period. From Jonson's comedies alone it would be possible to reconstruct whole areas of Elizabethan society; a study of them is indispensable if one would know the brilliant and amusing surface of the most sociable era of English history. At least one of Jonson's comedies, too, gives this close and realistic study of manners with a gayety and grace fairly rivalling Shakespeare; *The Silent Woman* is one of the most sparkling comedies ever written, full of splendid fun, and with a bright, quick movement which never flags.

Another peculiarity of Jonson's art is hinted at by the title *Every Man in His Humour*. The word "humor"

was a cant term in his day,[1] equivalent to "whim" or "foible." He hit upon the device of endowing each one of his characters with some particular whim or affectation, some ludicrous exaggeration of manner, speech, or dress; and of so thrusting forward this single odd trait that all others might be lost sight of. Every man, in other words, should be "in his humor." This working principle Jonson extended afterward in his two great comedies, *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*. In *Volpone* he studied, not a foible or whim, but a master-passion, the passion of greed, as it affects a whole social group; in *The Alchemist* he made an elaborate study of human gullibility. There is doubtless something mechanical in this method of going to work according to a set programme. Shakespeare also has devoted whole plays to the study of a master-passion—in *Othello* that of jealousy, in *Macbeth* that of ambition. But he does this in a very different way from Jonson; with much more variety, surprise, and free play of life. Jonson has, as it were, a thesis to illustrate, and holds up one character after another, as a logician presents the various parts of his argument. In other words, he always, or nearly always, lets us see the machinery. But while he thus loses in spontaneity, he gains in intellectual unity and in massiveness of purpose.

Jonson's Humors.

Jonson's lyric gift, for its delicacy and sweetness, was conspicuous even in the Elizabethan age, when almost every writer was capable of turning off a charming song. The best known of his lyrics are "Drink to me only with thine eyes," and "See the chariot at hand here of love"; of both these the old-time music has fortunately reached us. Like Shakespeare, he used his lyric power to insert into the sober setting of his plays exquisite gems of song. The "Queen and huntress, chaste and fair," from *Cynthia's Revels*, is

His Lyric Gift.

[1] Note Bardolph's use of the word in *Henry IV* and *Henry V*.

a perfect example of classic beauty in lyric form, in contrast with the romantic glamour of Shakespeare's "Take, oh, take those lips away," from *Measure for Measure*, or "Full fathom five thy father lies," from *The Tempest*.

Jonson was also a critic of great sanity and force. His volume of short reflections upon life and art, entitled *Timber*, shows in an attractive guise the solidity, aggressiveness, and downright honesty of his mind. It was chiefly these qualities of aggressive decision and rugged honesty which enabled him to hold for a quarter of a century his position of literary dictator, and lord of the "tavern-wits." The tavern was for the seventeenth century what the coffee-house was for the eighteenth, a rallying-place for literary men; and Jonson is almost as typical a tavern figure as Falstaff. His "mountain belly and his rocky face," his genial, domineering personality, ruled by royal right the bohemian circle which gathered at "The Mermaid" or "The Devil," where the young fellows of the "tribe of Ben" heard words

Jonson as a Literary Dictator.

> So nimble and so full of subtle flame
> As if that every one from whence they came
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
> And had resolved to live a fool the rest
> Of his dull life.[1]

Here took place those famous wit-combats between Jonson and Shakespeare described by Fuller under the simile of a sea-fight; Jonson, slow of movement and "high built in learning," being likened to a great Spanish galleon, Shakespeare to an English man-of-war, swift to strike and dart away, confounding the enemy with agility and adroitness.

The qualities for which Ben Jonson demands admiration are rather of the solid than the brilliant kind. In an age of imaginative license he preached the need of re-

[1] Verses entitled "Master Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson."

straint; in an age of hasty, careless workmanship he preached the need of sound construction and good finish. He was a safe guide; if the younger dramatists of his day had heeded him, the drama would not have gone on, as it did, deepening in extravagance and license until it died, so to speak, of dissipation.

Decadence of the Drama.

In the dramatists next to be discussed we shall see the opposition between romantic and classical elements such as are represented in the works of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. On the whole, the romantic forces were in the ascendant, but one classical legacy—the satiric presentation of real life in what is called the Comedy of Manners—is due to Jonson's influence. This tendency grew stronger as the century advanced, and many of the Jacobean dramatists yielded to it in their later days. It must be remembered that both the romantic and the realistic elements were used in a way that justifies us in applying the term decadence to the drama of the period. There was a straining for effect, a deliberate search for sensation, in the romance, and an unbelievable coarseness in the realism. And in both there was an absence of moral standards, a disregard of moral values, that marked a great falling off from the plane of Shakespeare and Jonson. It had been the glory of the early English Renaissance, in distinction from the Italian, that it had subordinated individual enterprise and initiative to the service of the common weal. In these later days the drama became a positive enemy of the social order. It was in part for this reason that the Puritans attacked it, and wholly for this reason that it had no strength to resist the attack.

Next to Shakespeare and Ben Jonson the most impressive body of plays is that which goes under the names of Beaumont and Fletcher, though in fact these two collaborated in only ten, the rest being the work of Fletcher alone or in partnership with others.

Francis Beaumont (1584–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625) are, in Lowell's phrase, among "the double stars of the heavens of poetry." Fletcher, the elder of the two, was the son of a Bishop of London, through whom the young dramatist gained an unusual insight into court life. None of Fletcher's fellows knew so well as he how to paint the hollow inside and the exquisite outer finish of courtly manners. Another fact contributing to form his genius was that the official residence of his father, the episcopal palace at Fulham, lay amid beautiful river and forest scenery. To the country memories gathered here in boyhood he gave expression later in the pastoral play of *The Faithful Shepherdess*, as well as in the songs with which his dramas are richly interspersed.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

At the Mermaid tavern, among those "sealed of the tribe of Ben," he met the man whose name is inseparably linked with his own. Francis Beaumont was five years younger than Fletcher, being about twenty-one at the time of their meeting. After their partnership began, tradition says that they lived together on the Bankside, sharing everything, even their clothing, in common. This at least represents a more essential truth, that they entered into a singularly effective intellectual partnership; one mind supplying what the other lacked, to produce a result of full and balanced beauty. Beaumont had the deeper and more serious imagination, and the greater constructive power; Fletcher excelled chiefly in lyric sweetness, rhetorical fluency, and many-colored sentiment. Beaumont died in the same year as Shakespeare (1616); his colaborer lived until the accession of Charles I, in 1625.

Their Intellectual Partnership.

Among the plays jointly written, the best are perhaps *Philaster* and *The Maid's Tragedy*, both produced about 1611. The theme of *Philaster* is a common one in the

old drama, the same, for instance, as that of *Cymbeline*, namely, the unfounded jealousy of a lover, and the unswerving faithfulness of his lady, who follows him in the disguise of a page. The treatment shows the tendency of later romanticists to push a situation to extremes, beyond all credibility and reason; but the play contains perhaps more passages of pure poetry than any other in the authors' long list. *The Maid's Tragedy* is dramatically more powerful. The soul of the hero is torn between his sense of personal honor and his sense of the inviolable divinity of the King who has shamefully wronged him. Here again there is that straining after intensity which marks the dramatic decadence. In a sense, to be sure, the search after intensity is often present even in the Elizabethan drama at its freshest and strongest. We have only to think of the typical characters and situations of Marlowe and Shakespeare to realize this fact. But the intensity of the later drama is more feverish and artificial. As the obviously "strong" situations began to be worked out, dramatists made excursions into the strained and the exceptional, in order to find novel matter. Of this tendency *The Maid's Tragedy* is an example, as well as of the moral laxity that marked much of these authors' work. The moral values are not preserved with the absolute health of soul which is Shakespeare's greatest glory, but are apt to be blurred or distorted in the endeavor after piquancy and novelty. But it would be a great mistake to conceive of Beaumont and Fletcher in this merely negative light without holding in mind their great positive qualities. They are "absolute lords of a goodly realm of romance"; and the plays that go under their common name, for splendor and charm are perhaps not to be paralleled in any single body of Renaissance drama outside of that of Shakespeare himself.

"The Maid's Tragedy."

After Beaumont's death Fletcher collaborated with

Massinger and others, his later work showing a tendency toward the comedy of manners enlivened by witty dialogue, for which his facile genius fitted him.

Thomas Dekker.

Of the life of Thomas Dekker almost nothing is known. The date of his birth is guessed to be between 1570 and 1577, and he is entirely lost sight of a few years before the outbreak of the Civil War. But his individuality is so distinctly reflected in his plays that he seems one of the most definite figures of his time—a sunny, light-hearted nature, full of real, even if somewhat disorderly, genius. *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (written before 1599), perhaps his earliest play, is his best. It is a study of London apprentice life, woven about a slender but charming love-story. The master-shoemaker, Simon Eyre, and his wife, Margery, are drawn with a broad, exuberant humor wholly captivating. *The Shoemaker's Holiday* has in it all the morning gladness and freshness of the Elizabethan temper. Dekker wrote one other charming play, *Old Fortunatus*, a dramatized fairy-tale of the wishing-hat and exhaustless purse. It is a chaotic piece of work, but its incoherence rather adds to than detracts from the dreamy nursery-tale effect. The later work of Dekker, most of it done in collaboration with other playwrights, is much more serious, showing that he, too, felt the reaction from joyous romance which brought Shakespeare into his period of tragedy. He was one of the dramatists whom Jonson attacked, in *The Poetaster*, and he did not let the quarrel drop. He is, indeed, a central figure in the group of literary bohemians who preserved, in the generation after Shakespeare, the tradition of his predecessors, with their scandals and quarrels, their freedom of life and art.

Thomas Heywood is another dramatist whose history is almost a blank. He was probably born about the same time as Dekker, and seems to have been alive in 1648.

His life therefore spans the whole period of the drama from Marlowe to Shirley. He was immensely productive, declaring himself to have had "a whole hand or a main finger in two hundred and twenty plays." He must in fairness be judged as a dramatic journalist, in an age when the theatre tried to do what the newspaper and the lecture hall now accomplish, rather than as a dramatist in the more dignified and permanent sense. In one direction, however, Heywood achieved mastery, namely, in the drama of simple domestic life. His most famous play of this nature is *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Here for once Heywood handled his subject with noble simplicity, with deep tragic effect, and with a truth and sweetness of moral tone which justify Charles Lamb's saying that Heywood is "a prose Shakespeare." In the drama of domestic life mixed with adventure, Heywood is also successful, though in a less supreme degree. Perhaps the best example of this type of play to be found among his works is *The Fair Maid of the West*, in which there are some capital vignettes of life in an English seaport town, as well as some delightfully breezy melodramatic sea-fighting.

Thomas Heywood.

Thomas Middleton (1570–1627) was a man of much larger caliber. By his frank contact with life as it is, and by his continual effort to see life in its plainness and entirety, he attained at last to a grasp and insight which place him among the great names of the English stage. He had no university training, but was entered at Gray's Inn in 1596. His life about the law-courts gave him an intimate knowledge of the shady side of the metropolis, which was of great service to him when he began to write realistic comedies. Of these the best are *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, and *The Roaring Girl*, written with Dekker. His transition from comedy to tragedy is marked by the very interesting play *A Fair Quarrel*, in which the noble seriousness of

Thomas Middleton.

certain scenes, and the fine dramatic ring of the verse, herald the approach of his complete maturity. It was between 1620 and his death in 1627, that is, when over fifty, that he wrote the two plays, *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women*, in which his sturdy powers show themselves fully ripened.

Both *The Changeling* and *Women Beware Women* are unpleasant in plot, and marred by the obtrusion of crude horrors. They go back in fact to the type of drama called the "tragedy of blood," of which Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* are examples. Indeed, *Hamlet* and *Lear* are really in plot tragedies of blood, though spiritualized out of all inner resemblance to the species. Middleton, however, uses horror for its own sake, and to emphasize situations already strained and painful, which mar the two plays. But both are studded with fine poetry, fine in feeling and supremely fine in expression. Middleton learned, better than any of Shakespeare's fellows, the secret of the master's diction. Without imitating the Shakespearian manner, he handles language, at his best, with the same superb confidence; and this is true of his comic prose as well as of his serious blank verse.

Tragedy of Blood.

In John Webster we encounter the phenomenon of a really great poet—one who in sheer power of expression comes nearest to Shakespeare of all the men of that generation except Middleton—devoting himself to melodrama of the most gory and unrestrained description. His two greatest plays, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, push the devices of physical horror to their farthest limit. They show the tragedy of blood in its most developed form, and employ all the grisly paraphernalia of the madhouse, the graveyard, and the shambles, as well as the agencies of moral terror, to wring from the drama all the

John Webster.

crude excitement it is capable of giving. The subject-matter of Webster, therefore, is as far as possible from appealing to modern taste. But his power of conceiving character, and still more the surprising poetry, now wild and stormy, now tender and lyrical, now pungently epigrammatic, which he puts into the mouths of his people, have kept his fame intact, in spite of the repellent form of play he chose to exhibit these gifts upon. Of the two plays named above, *The Duchess of Malfi* is the finer. Webster not only shows in it a much firmer stagecraft than in his earlier effort, but he also reveals powers of gayety and playfulness, and an understanding of the heart hardly to be looked for from one who voluntarily elected the tragedy of blood as his medium. At least two of the characters, the Duchess of Malfi and her husband Antonio, are robust and healthy figures, who even under the stress of torture keep their broad, quiet humanity. They show what Webster might have done if he had been born under a luckier star.

John Ford.

In John Ford (1586–1640?) the search after abnormal situations reached its height on the moral and spiritual side, as it had done in Webster on the physical side. Ford was a man of means, not compelled to write hastily in order to gain an uncertain livelihood from the stage. His plays are good in structure and his blank verse is excellent. But while his work shows no sign of degeneration in respect to form, his deliberate turning away from the healthy and normal in human life, and the strange morbid melancholy which shadows his work, betray very plainly that he is of the decadence. His best play is *The Broken Heart.*

Early in the history of the drama, war began between the actors and the Puritans. In 1576 we hear of strolling companies being kept out of London by Puritan lawmakers; and when the first theatres were erected they were placed in the suburbs to the north, and in the

"liberties," or exempt lands, across the Thames in Southwark. Under Queen Elizabeth's protection the actors grew strong enough to enter the city; and as long as her hand was at the helm, the Puritans did not assert themselves very vigorously. But when James I came to the throne, with his lack of personal dignity, his bigoted dictum of the divine right of kings, his immoral court full of greedy nobles from Scotland and Spain, the Puritan party gained rapidly in aggressiveness. The thing which the Puritans hated most under the sun, after copes and crucifixes, was the theatre, because it was in the theatre that the "lust of the eye and the pride of life" found fullest expression. Naturally, therefore, as the Puritan disapproval grew more severe, the dramatists drew away from the London burgesses, and appealed in the tone and matter of their plays more and more to the corrupt taste of the court—a fact to which the rapid degeneration of the drama was in large part due.

War between Actors and Puritans.

It has been thought from certain passages in the plays of Philip Massinger (1583–1640), as well as from their general tone, that he was at heart a Puritan, not in the narrow political sense, but as the term applies to men of high moral ideals, to whom the things that make for righteousness are the first concern, and the shows and passions of life, by comparison, unreal. By some ironic fate Massinger was born a dramatic poet at a time when the stage, to live at all, had to appeal to the jaded taste of a court. He spins his plots of worldly passion and ambition, but without real interest in them. When wickedness is required he forces his characters duly into wickedness, and in the effort to overcome the bias of his mind makes them very wicked indeed. But it is when he has a chance to treat some theme of self-sacrifice, of loyalty, of gratitude, of unworldly renunciation in the interest of an ideal, as in *The*

Philip Massinger.

Great Duke of Florence, The Virgin Martyr, and *The Maid of Honour,* that he shows himself to be a real poet, and handles his subject with placid dignity and power. He also achieved at least one great success in comedy, in his *New Way to Pay Old Debts.* The character of the miser and extortioner in this play, Sir Giles Overreach, holds a place among the classic figures of the English stage.

James Shirley.

The great procession of dramatic poets which begins with Marlowe comes to an end with James Shirley (1596–1666). In him we detect a constant attempt to eke out his own scanty invention by imitating his predecessors. His work has, in other words, the "literary" quality, as distinguished from original inspiration. This criticism, however, applies chiefly to his tragedies. In comedy he followed the realistic type known as the comedy of manners, and brought it very near to the style of the Restoration. In *Hyde Park* (1637) it would take only a slight change here and there to convince us that we are among the gallants and dames of the time of Charles II, or even of Queen Anne. The dialogue is in prose, the language perfectly every-day and realistic; instead of the long monologues and rhetorical passages of the earlier romantic comedy, there is a quick bandying of the shuttlecock of talk. The tone is that of a frivolous, gossipy age, not much in earnest about anything, and given over to the cult of fashion.

When we remember that *Hyde Park* was written on the eve of the most tremendous upheaval which English society has ever witnessed, this frivolity of tone becomes significant. It marks the point of extreme departure from the Puritan temper. So long as the dramatists were in earnest, even in the portrayal of those things which to the Puritan mind were abominations, there was a bond of sympathy. What the Puritan could not stand was the gay insincerity, the airy trifling with the essential

facts of life, such as Shirley's comedies exemplify. After the election of the Long Parliament, the Puritan party quickly came to a reckoning with the theatre. In 1641 appeared a pamphlet called *The Stage-Players' Complaint*, which says pathetically: "The High Commission Court is down, the Star-Chamber is down, and some think Bishops will down; but why should not we then that are far inferior to any of these, justly fear that we should be down too?" In September of 1642 an ordinance of both Houses of Parliament closed the theatres throughout the kingdom. They were not reopened until eighteen years later, when the reins of power had fallen from the dead hand of Cromwell, and Charles II ascended the throne from which his father had been led to the scaffold.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: NON-DRAMATIC LITERATURE BEFORE THE RESTORATION

I

The Seventeenth Century.

The non-dramatic literature of the early seventeenth century shows in broad markings the same opposing forces which we discover in the drama—on the one hand, assertion of the right of the individual to do as he pleased in life and in art; on the other, insistence on the importance in both of order, restraint, and adherence to standards. On the one hand the romantic impulse tended to outdo itself in a quest for novelty and excitement of experience; and on the other, a classic taste was gaining strength, partly by virtue of reaction from the excesses of the romanticists. It is characteristic of the confusion and shifting currents of the time that there is little unity of practice between art and life. The Cavalier poets, some of whom, in conduct, were true children of the Renaissance, sons of Belial, tended toward the restrained and even workmanship of Ben Jonson, while the religious poets, whose lives were saintly, wrote with an extravagance that seems the extremity of wilfulness and whim. It was indeed an age of uncertainty and transition, both in literature and in political and social life.

Differences from the Age of Elizabeth.

There are many striking differences between this age and the great era which went before. In the first place, the splendid sense of national unity, of which devotion to Elizabeth was the symbol, was lost. Under her successor, the Scotch King, James I, party strife between the supporters of the King and those who maintained the rights of the people through Parliament, between those who held to

the authority of the established church and its bishops, and those who demanded a more democratic form of church government or even entire freedom of the individual in matters of conscience, increased, until in the next reign it resulted in civil war. In the second place, the great conceptions, philosophical, political, and social, that had marked the preceding age, gave way and disappeared. One of these was that of an ideal union between the interests of the Renaissance and those of the Reformation, between the claims of this world and those of the other, which, in the case of Spenser and Sidney, made for a complete and thoroughly developed humanity. Instead, we have in the seventeenth century, on the one hand, the attractive but immoral Cavaliers, and on the other the impressive but intolerant Puritans—followers of two utterly opposed views of life. In the lack of great conceptions, human ambition and human character became less splendid and unified. In place of Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Raleigh, we have Jonson, Bacon, and Lord Herbert of Cherbury. Milton and the great Puritans are obvious exceptions, but Milton illustrates the personal tragedy of the loss of Spenser's breadth of view in life and character. Above all, the imaginative appeal of the new world beyond the sea had become dulled; America was no longer a field for Raleigh's search for Eldorado, or a background for *The Tempest*, but rather a place for colonization and trade. There were, it is true, compensations. If human character was less grandiose than among the Elizabethans, it was much more self-conscious and curious. If the men of the seventeenth century were essentially smaller, at least they left much fuller record of themselves, in biography and autobiography. If the world was less spacious and less inviting to bold exploration and speculation, it was, on the other hand, a possible field for exploitation and patient investigation. If Eldorado disappeared,

trade expanded; and while imagination grew weary, science was born. A practical sense of realities of life, testified to by the realistic studies in the drama, was beginning to be felt. Here again the transcendental vision of the Puritan and his absorption in the eternities are an obvious exception; but it is one of the eccentricities of the period that the Puritan, with all his intense concern with the other world, should have had so strong a practical sense of the values of this one.

A final difference between the two periods is present everywhere in the literatures of both, in drama, sermon, and song. The age of Elizabeth was one of sunshine and joy, of enthusiasm, of confidence in this world and the next. The early seventeenth century was one of shadows and forebodings, of melancholy and depression. To pass from one to another is like passing from a plain bright with sunshine into the twilight of a forest. The clouds gathering in the political sky, the theology of Calvin and the Puritans, with its dark view of man's future, account sufficiently for this change, but it is perhaps further to be explained as one of those periodic reactions of human nature, which, weary and sated with joy and excitement, readily falls prey to melancholy and fear. The difference is easily seen in the late drama, where shapes of evil and horror haunted men's fancy, and in other literature, where death challenges love as the theme calling out the highest eloquence. Even the attempts of comedians and Cavaliers to throw off this prevailing mood, in their hectic gayety and persistent trifling, are a witness to its power, and often are followed by a reaction to religious contemplation, ecstatic or gloomy.

Of the two great transition figures who stand between the two periods, Ben Jonson has already been considered. The other, Francis Bacon, was born in 1561, three years before Shakespeare. His father was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Elizabeth, and his uncle was Lord Burleigh,

Elizabeth's prime minister. He was thus marked out by birth for a public career; and he threw himself into the strife for place with the keen intellectual zest and the moral ruthlessness characteristic of the Renaissance courtier. Owing to the opposition of his jealous uncle, he got little preferment under the Queen; but under James I he rose rapidly through various offices to be Lord Chancellor, with the title of Viscount Saint Albans. In this position he supported his dignities by a magnificence of living altogether out of proportion to his legitimate income. In 1621 he was impeached before the House of Lords for bribe-taking and corruption in office, found guilty, and subjected to fine and imprisonment. He retired, a broken and ruined man, to his country seat of Gorhambury, and spent the remaining five years of his life in scientific and philosophic pursuits; still, however, keeping up a show of his former magnificence, with an unconquerable pride which caused Prince Charles to exclaim: "This man scorns to go out in a snuff!"

Bacon; His Life and Character.

For Bacon's personal character it is impossible to feel much admiration. He exhibited nearly all the unworthy traits of the Renaissance politician—greed, ostentation, heartlessness, and lax public morality. But it is equally impossible not to admire his spacious and luminous mind, and the devotion to pure thought which constituted his deeper life. In a letter written at the outset of his career he says proudly: "I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends; for I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In pursuance of this majestic programme he sketched out a work which was to have been called the *Instauratio Magna*, the object of which was to present a complete view of knowledge as it existed in his day, and a guide for its further progress. Of the six books only one,

His Intellectual "Programme"; the Inductive System.

known as the *Novum Organum*, reached anything like definite shape; the *Advancement of Learning* (written also in Latin as *De Augmentis Scientiarum*) was intended as an introduction to the whole. The instrument by which science was to complete its conquest was the application of the principle of inductive reasoning, by which the observation of specific facts leads up to the formulation of general laws. In the old scholastic system of deduction, general principles had been first laid down, and particular facts had been explained in the light of these principles. In the latter case, since theory rested on no actual experience, the explanations flowing therefrom had for the most part been fantastic and untrue. The change in method had to come with the rise of the scientific spirit, it is Bacon's glory that he saw and expressed the vital need of change, before the scientific spirit had yet grown conscious of itself.

"The New Atlantis."

All this marks Bacon as a man of the Renaissance, exulting in the grandest conceptions and undaunted by the most daring enterprises. This mood he never entirely lost. One of his last writings was a sketch of an ideal commonwealth beyond the sea, called *The New Atlantis*. It resembles Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, with perhaps this significant difference—that while the inhabitants of Utopia owe their happy state to the operation of reason, those of Atlantis owe theirs to study and experiment. The centre of their commonwealth is a learned academy known as Solomon's House, and they despatch vessels yearly to bring them reports of inventions and discoveries throughout the world. A more practical Utopia this than Sir Thomas More's, and yet a dream.

The "Essays."

Bacon's interest in the world as it actually was is shown by the *Essays*—"dispersed meditations," he calls them, or memoranda. As such they were first published (then ten in number) in 1597, in the author's thirty-sixth year. Fifteen years

later they were issued again, with additions; and in 1625, a year before Bacon's death, they were put forth in final form, the essays now numbering fifty-eight, the old ones revised and expanded. It is clear that their charm grew upon Bacon, and urged him, half against his will, to put more and more serious effort into the manipulation of a language for which he had no great respect, yet of which he is one of the greatest masters.

Their Subject-Matter.

Even in their finished state the *Essays* are desultory and suggestive, rather than coherent or exhaustive. They deal with many subjects, of public and private conduct, of statecraft, of the nature and value of human passions and human relations; and with these graver themes are intermingled others of a lighter sort, on building, on the planting of gardens, on the proper mounting and acting of masques and other scenic displays. To a modern understanding those which deal with the deeper questions of human nature are apt to seem somewhat shallow and worldly wise. We get from them little real vision, few generous points of view; everywhere we find wit, keen observation, grave or clever mundane judgments. Now and again, to be sure, Bacon startles us with an altogether unworldly sentence, such as this: "Little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth, for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love." Some of the essays, such as that entitled "Of Great Place," show an unworldly wisdom which, if applied to Bacon's own life, would have made it a very different thing. Not seldom, too, he lifts the curtain upon that inner passion of his existence, the thirst for intellectual truth, which made him noble in spite of the shortcomings of his character. "Truth," he says, "which only doth judge itself . . . is the sovereign good of human nature." But for the most part their mood is one of practical and sometimes cynical worldliness. Of

"Marriage and Single Life" he says: "He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune."

Their Style.

Bacon shows himself in the *Essays* to be a consummate rhetorician. He made for himself a style which, though not quite flexible and modern, was unmatchable for pith and pregnancy in the conveyance of his special kind of thought. Though a devoted Latinist, and using a much Latinized vocabulary, he saw the structural differences of the two languages so clearly that, when the bulk of English prose was being written in loose sentences of enormous length, he struck out at once a thoroughly English type of sentence, short, crisp, and firmly knit. He rejected the conceitfulness and overcrowded imagery of the Euphuists, but knew how to light up his thought with well-placed figure, and to give to it an imaginative glow and charm upon occasion, contrasting strongly with the unfigurative style of Ben Jonson, who represents in his prose the extreme revulsion from Euphuism. For the student of expression Bacon's essays are of endless interest and profit; the more one reads them the more remarkable seem their compactness and their nervous vitality. They shock a sluggish attention into wakefulness, as if by an electric contact; and though they may sometimes fail to nourish, they can never fail to stimulate.

John Donne.

A more thoroughly characteristic figure of the period is John Donne (1573–1631). Born a Roman Catholic, he was sent while very young to Oxford, and then plunged into the bohemian life of London. Apparently to break off an illicit love-affair, he was sent with Essex on the expedition to Cadiz in 1596, an enterprise that ranked for daring with the repulse of the Armada, and then returned to become secretary to Lord Keeper Ellesmere. Before this he had written a body of poetry which, though not published until after his death, circulated in manuscript, and like Wyatt's and Surrey's, had an immense influence on younger poets.

Part of this poetry takes classical form as satires, elegies, and epistles—though in the state in which it has reached us it has anything but classical smoothness—and part is written in lyrical forms of extraordinary variety. Most of it purports to deal with life, descriptively or experimentally; and the first thing to strike the reader is Donne's extraordinary frankness and penetrating realism. The next is his cynicism. His love-poems, with a few exceptions, show the reverse of the Elizabethan attitude. His view of love is physical; he curses his mistress instead of praising her; and unlike the passionate sonneteer, he sets up inconstancy as his ideal of conduct.

His Use of Conceits.

It may readily be surmised how this astonishing new poetry took the literary cliques of London by storm. But as striking as the novelty of subject-matter and point of view is that of its form. Instead of the unvarying succession of sonnets, Donne gives nearly every theme a verse and stanza form peculiar to itself; and instead of decorating his theme by conventional comparisons, he tries to illumine or emphasize his thought by far-fetched metaphors and extravagant hyperboles. In moments of inspiration his style becomes wonderfully poignant and direct, heart-searching in its simple human accents, with an originality and force for which we look in vain among the clear and fluent melodies of Elizabethan lyrists. Unfortunately, these moments are comparatively rare. Too often the "conceits," as these extravagant figures are called, are so odd that we lose sight of the thing to be illustrated, in the startling nature of the illustration. With him love is a spider which, dropped into the wine of life, turns it to poison; or it is a cannon-ball:

> By him, as by chain'd shot, whole ranks do die;

or it is a devouring fish:

> He is the tyrant pike, our hearts the fry.

This fashion of conceitful writing, somewhat like euphuism in prose, appeared in Italy and Spain also. It was the peculiar disease of romantic poetry, as stereotyped form and conventional poetic diction were of classic.

Donne's Later Life.

About 1601 Donne fell passionately and seriously in love with the niece of the Lord Keeper, married her, and was imprisoned for a time by his angry father-in-law. For several years after his release he supported his family by a somewhat undignified resort to patronage; then, at the King's persuasion, he entered the church, where he rose rapidly to be Dean of Saint Paul's, and the most famous preacher of his time. After the death of his wife he fell more and more under the shadow of a terrible spiritual gloom. Even in his early *Songs and Sonnets*, the thought of death often appears with gruesome realism, as in *The Relic:*

> When my grave is broken up again
> Some second guest to entertain,
>
> And he that digs it spies
> A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
> Will he not let us alone?

In his sermons it is realized in its physical aspects with terrible intensity. As his life drew near its close he had himself sculptured in his winding-sheet, standing upright in his coffin, and this monument was placed above his grave in Saint Paul's.

George Herbert.

George Herbert (1593–1632), like Donne, published little or no poetry in his lifetime. After a youth spent in preparation for a court career, and some years of disappointed waiting for court favors, he entered the church. Once within the pale of the religious life, he felt the full force of that spiritual agitation and awe which sooner or later overtook all

serious minds in the first half of the seventeenth century. After two years of devoted labor as a parish priest at Bemerton, near Salisbury, he was stricken with a mortal malady. On his death-bed he handed to Nicholas Ferrar a bundle of manuscript, asking him to read it, and then to use it or destroy it, as seemed to him fit. The volume was published the next year under the title of *The Temple*, in allusion to the scriptural verse, "In His temple doth every man speak in His honor." It is a curious picture of the conflict which Herbert went through, while subjecting his will and his worldly ambition to the service of God.

Herbert pushed even further than Donne the use of conceits. Many of his poems are mere bundles of these oddities of metaphor, quaint and crabbed to the last degree. But he manages, by means of them, to express many pregnant and far-reaching thoughts. At times he shows an unusual power of direct and familiar phrasing. By means of sudden turns, emphatic pauses, lightning-like "stabs" of thought, he forces home his words into the reader's memory, and makes his quaint and daring conceitfulness interpret, rather than obscure, his meaning.

The pervading atmosphere of Herbert's poetry is one of moral earnestness and sincere piety, rather intellectual than impassioned. He is, therefore, the true poet of the Church of England. Richard Crashaw (1612?–1649?), on the other hand, is the poet of Catholicism. His attitude toward divine things is not that of pious contemplation, but of ecstatic and mystical worship. His religious sense is southern rather than northern. The Reformation, as such, did not affect him. It served merely to kindle into intense flame his devotion to the older church. This is the more curious because of the fact that Crashaw's youth and early nurture were of an ultraprotestant sort. At the college of Peterhouse in Cambridge, however, he read

* Richard Crashaw.

deeply in the works of the early church fathers and in the lives of the saints, and he took part in the fasts and vigils of a religious brotherhood gathered about Nicholas Ferrar at Little Gidding, just outside Cambridge. His religious poetry, written at this time, recognizes the influence of George Herbert in the title *Steps to the Temple*. As the struggle between the Church of England and the Puritan dissenters grew more and more bitter, he fled for refuge to the arms of that venerable mother church of which his nature had from the first made him a member. He was exiled by Cromwell's government; and after a time of bitter poverty in Paris, he was befriended by a brother poet, Abraham Cowley, and introduced to Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I, who had taken refuge at the court of France from the storms of civil war in England. Through her influence with a Roman cardinal, Crashaw was given a place in the Monastery of Our Lady of Loretto, in Italy; and he died shortly after, from the effect of a pilgrimage which he made on foot in the burning heat of the Italian summer—a fit end for a poet in whom lived again the mystical religious fervor of the Middle Ages.

Crashaw's poetry is excessively uneven. It contains the most extravagant examples of frigid conceitfulness to be found among all the followers of Donne; yet side by side with these, often in the same poem, occur passages of noble distinction. His two most characteristic poems are perhaps "The Flaming Heart" and the "Hymn to Saint Theresa." He sings the raptures of the soul visited by divine love, in terms as concrete and glowing as any human lover has ever used to celebrate an earthly passion. An ethereal music, and a kind of luminous haze, both reminding us of Shelley's work, are the distinguishing features of his poetry at its best. At the close of his poem entitled "Description of a Religious House," we find the lines:

The self-remembering soul sweetly recovers
Her kindred with the stars, and meditates her immortal way
Home to the original source of light and intellectual day.

This is the key to Crashaw's imaginative world. He is like a moth fluttering in the radiance which streams from the "source of light and intellectual day."

Henry Vaughan (1621–1695), the third poet of this group, spent his youth among the romantic glens of the valley of the Usk, in northern Wales. Here was the legendary seat of King Arthur's court; and here, tradition says, Shakespeare heard from the lips of the country folk the name and doings of Puck, before writing *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Vaughan went up to Oxford in 1638, just as the quarrel between the King and the Parliament was drawing to a head. He fought for the King's cause, and when that cause was lost, retired to his native valley in Wales, to spend the rest of his long life as an obscure country doctor. The death of his wife and his own severe illness awakened his religious nature, and under the influence of Herbert's *Temple* he wrote and published (1650) the first part of *Silex Scintillans*, or Sparks from a Flint-stone, that is, sparks struck by divine grace from a hard and sinful heart.

Henry Vaughan.

Vaughan's poetry, like Crashaw's, is very uneven. The reader must search long before finding the things of value, but when found they are worth the search. His best poems, such as "The World," "Departed Friends," and "The Hidden Flower," show an extraordinary insight into the mystical life of nature and of the heart, and a strange nearness to the unseen world. No English poet has touched the deeper mysteries with more childlike simplicity and unconsciousness, nor with a more delicate and elusive music.

The poets just discussed may, by virtue of their kinship in style and in metrical form, be called the school

of Donne. Another group may equally well be entitled the school of Spenser, since they employ a modification of the Spenserian stanza for narrative poetry, and otherwise resemble him in features of style, such as use of figures of speech, especially personifications. Above all, they have the color and music of his verse. Of these the chief was Giles Fletcher (1588–1623), whose epic entitled *Christ's Victory and Triumph on Earth and in Heaven* is, for all its quaintness of thought and phrase, no unworthy forerunner of *Paradise Lost*. It was published in 1610, when Milton was two years old. Signs of its influence upon Milton can be traced from his early "Hymn on the Nativity" to the *Paradise Regained* of his old age. The last canto, which deals with the resurrection and with the entrance of Christ into heaven, is the most beautiful part of the poem. It is a great Easter hymn, expressing the joy of earthly and heavenly things over the risen Redeemer. The sympathy with nature which it reveals is exquisite, resembling Chaucer's in its childlike delight and sweetness, but filled with a religious ecstasy which Chaucer's worldliness excluded.

The School of Spenser: Giles Fletcher.

An older brother of Giles, Phineas Fletcher (1582–1650), followed Spenser in writing a series of eclogues based on his life at Cambridge, but instead of introducing the conventional type of rustic, the shepherd, he made his characters fishermen, whence his title, *Piscatory Eclogues*. Like Spenser he made his masterpiece an allegory, but instead of figuring forth the moral life of man he devotes himself to an endless account of man's physical and physiological nature under the metaphor of an island-city. *The Purple Island* is a stock example of the absurdities of the allegorical school, but it suggests, also, the interest of the time in science.

Phineas Fletcher.

* William Browne (1590–1645) and George Wither (1588–

1667) continued the pastoral tradition of the school of Spenser; and like Spenser they vitalized the conventions of pastoral verse by breathing into them a sincere feeling for nature, and by making them convey, under a playful disguise, a certain amount of ethical and religious thought. Browne's *Britlania's Pastorals* gives us the homely sights and sounds of Devonshire in a way which makes his pages charming in spite of their sentimentality, their false mythology, and their strained allegory. Wither's *Mistress of Philerete* is a celebration of Virtue, whom the poet personifies and praises exactly as if she were some lovely shepherdess of the plain. Both these poets passed beyond the range of the Spenserian tradition. Browne was the author of the epitaph long attributed to Ben Jonson, and still regarded as an epitome of the classic qualities of seventeenth-century verse.

Browne and Wither.

> Underneath this sable herse
> Lies the subject of all verse:
> Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother:
> Death, ere thou hast slain another
> Fair and learn'd and good as she,
> Time shall throw a dart at thee.

And Wither is best known for the Cavalier gayety of the song:

> Shall I, wasting in despair,
> Die because a woman's fair?

A third group of poets may be called the school of Jonson, partly because they reflect his quality of careful workmanship, but still more because they were of his personal following, "sealed of the tribe of Ben," and like him devoted to this world and its pleasures. The chief of them was Robert Herrick, who made of Jonson his patron saint and adopted his creed to live merrily and write good verses.

The School of Jonson.

Robert Herrick.

Robert Herrick (1591–1674) was apprenticed in boyhood to his uncle, a goldsmith in Cheapside. After some time spent at Cambridge he returned to London, in his thirtieth year, and lived on his wits in the literary bohemia of the Inns of Court. In 1629, having taken orders, he was presented by King Charles to the vicarage of Dean Prior, in Devonshire. Here, with no duties to perform save the reading of a weekly sermon to a handful of sleepy parishioners, he had ample opportunity, during the next nineteen years, to develop his peculiar lyrical gift. His genius was of the kind which carves cherry-stones, not of the kind which hews great figures from the living rock. Left perfectly to himself, amid the flowers of his vicarage garden, with the pretty traditional ceremonies and merrymakings of country life to look at, he spent his days carving cherry-stones, indeed, but giving to them the delicate finish of cameos or of goldsmith's work. In poem after poem he enters with extraordinary zest and folk-feeling into the small joys and pageants of rural life—a bridal procession, a cudgel-play between two clowns on the green, a puppet-show at the fair, the hanging of holly and box at Candlemas eve. Perhaps the most exquisite of all is "Corinna Going a-Maying." This little masterpiece is drenched with the pungent dews of a spring morning. As the poet calls his "sweet slug-a-bed" out-of-doors, and leads her through the village streets, already decked with whitethorn, toward the fields and woods where the May-day festivities are to be enacted, we feel that the poetry of old English life speaks through one who has experienced to the full its simple charm. Even the note of sadness at the end, the looking forward to that dark time when Corinna herself and all her village mates shall "lie drowned in endless night," has a peasant-like sincerity of feeling.

When the parliamentary forces had gained the battle

which they had been waging with the King's men, and Herrick as a loyalist was ejected from his living, he went back to London. The year of his return (1648) he published his poems under the title of *Hesperides and Noble Numbers*, the latter half of the title referring to the religious poems of the collection. There could be no more striking sign of the immense religious ferment of the time than these poems, emanating as they do from an epicurean and pagan nature, whose philosophy of life is summed up in his most famous song: "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." In the wonderful poem called "The Litany," the masterpiece among Herrick's religious poems, we see how upon even his gay and sensuous nature there descended at times that dark shadow of religious terror which later found its final and appalling expression in the *Grace Abounding* of John Bunyan. In Herrick's case, however, this is only a passing phase of feeling. He is to be remembered as the poet of "Corinna Going a-Maying," the "Night-Piece to Julia," and of a myriad other little poems in which he chronicles his delight in nature, and in the exquisite surface of life as he saw it.

Herrick's Religious Poetry.

The attempt, which is notable in Herrick, to escape from the seriousness of the age was characteristic of the court of Charles I and of the three poets, Carew, Lovelace, and Suckling, who are known as the Cavalier poets. Of the three, Thomas Carew (1598–1638?) was the most sincere. His work is occasionally tinged with licentiousness; but much of it, on the other hand, has genuine beauty and dignity. He felt the influence of both Ben Jonson and Donne, and such a poem as "To His Mistress in Absence" has the sanity and finish of the one, mingled with the magnetic eloquence of the other. He is best known by his lighter efforts, such as his "Give me more love or more disdain," in which poem his felicity and courtly address display

The Cavalier Poets.

themselves at their height. He wrote also a striking court masque entitled *Cælum Britannicum*, which was produced in 1634, with the greatest magnificence, as a kind of counter-demonstration to a recent Puritan onslaught upon the theatre. Carew died in 1638, just before the bursting of the storm which was to scatter the gay society of Whitehall, and bring to poverty, exile, and death the men and women who had danced the measures in his joyous masque.

Suckling and Lovelace.

John Suckling (1609–1641) and Richard Lovelace (1618–1658) were young courtiers of wealth and great social brilliance, who practised poetry much as they practised swordsmanship; facility in turning a sonnet or a song being still, as in the Elizabethan age, considered a part of a courtier's education. Each of them wrote, it would seem almost by happy accident, two or three little songs which are the perfection of melody, grace, and aristocratic ease. Suckling's tone is cynical and mocking; the best songs of Lovelace, on the other hand, "To Lucasta on Going to the Wars" and "To Althea from Prison," breathe a spirit of old-fashioned chivalry, of faithfulness to the ideals of love and knightly honor. Both Suckling and Lovelace met with tragic reversal of fortune; and the contrast between their careless, brilliant youth and their later days has thrown about their names a romantic glamour which has had perhaps as much to do with preserving their fame as the tiny sheaf of lyrics they left behind.

Abraham Cowley.

Abraham Cowley (1618–1667) has been regarded as, next to Donne, the chief offender among the metaphysical school, but he seems to have preferred the leadership of Jonson, while his long religious epic might seem to connect him remotely with the followers of Spenser. Cowley was famous as a poet at fifteen, at thirty his name was one to con-

jure with, and in his later years he was accepted by his contemporaries as the crown and acme of the poets of all time. His reputation decayed rapidly after his death, and he is now a somewhat "frustrate ghost" in the corridors of fame. He has all the vicious mannerisms of the school of Donne, with little thought or passion to redeem them. His greatest effort, *The Mistress*, a series of love-poems, might, in Doctor Johnson's energetic words, "have been written for hire by a philosophical rhymer who had only heard of another sex"; and his once-famous *Davideis*, a heroic poem of the troubles of King David of Israel, is now hopelessly dead. From any sweeping condemnation of Cowley, however, must be excepted his earnest and simple lines "On the Death of Mr. William Hervey," his beautiful Elegy on Crashaw, and a few of his Pindarique Odes, which last have at times a full and sonorous music. The loose ode form, adapted by Cowley from the Greek of Pindar, was used all the way down through the age of Dryden and Pope, and was almost the only relief which the classic age allowed itself from the monotonous beat of the heroic couplet. Cowley, as secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria in her exile, was associated with the men who carried to victory the banner of classicism and prepared the way for Dryden. In his own work he hung dubiously between the romantic and the classic schools; the romantic impulse in him was weak, and the classical instinct not spontaneous.

Cowley wrote also a group of essays which reflect the self-study of the time. He thus bridges the gap between the impersonal observation of Bacon and the genial, friendly tone of Steele and Addison. His last essay, "Of Myself," might have served as a model for the first essay in the *Spectator*.

Another poet who is eclectic in his tendency is Andrew Marvell (1621–1678). Marvell was among the first of English poets to feel the charm of nature with romantic

intensity, and at the same time with matter-of-fact realism. The bulk of his nature-poetry was written between his twenty-ninth and his thirty-first years, while he was living in country seclusion at Nunappleton, as tutor to the young daughter of Lord Fairfax, commander-in-chief of the parliamentary forces. The principal record of these two years of poetic life is a long poem entitled "Appleton House"; besides this, the most beautiful of his country poems are perhaps "The Garden" and "The Mower to the Glow-worms." In these, and in his delicate little pastoral dialogues, he links himself with the pastoral school of Spenser; in other places, especially in the lines "To a Coy Mistress," he shows the influence of Donne. In his later life Marvell served for a time as assistant to Milton, then acting as Latin secretary to Cromwell's government. He helped Milton in his blindness, aided him to escape from his pursuers at the Restoration, and watched with mingled admiration and awe the progress of *Paradise Lost*, which began about 1658 to take shape, after twenty years' delay. In the noble "Ode to Cromwell," Marvell set an example, worthy of Milton himself, of simple dignity and classical restraint in the treatment of a political theme. And it is to Marvell that we owe the description of his opponent, Charles I, on the scaffold, in lines which, more than anything ever written, make him unforgettably the royal martyr:

Andrew Marvell.

> He nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene.

The characteristic prose of the seventeenth century is nearer the romantic eccentricity and extreme individuality of the poetry of Donne and his school than to the classic precision of Jonson. It is extremely loose in structure, overcolored, elaborate, wayward. In subject-matter the prose

Seventeenth-Century Prose.

represents the self-consciousness and personal interest of the time. It was a period of autobiography, personal essay, biography, and history.,

Sir Walter Raleigh.

At the very outset we are confronted by the splendid figure of Sir Walter Raleigh, a prisoner in the tower after the failure of his daring plans in America, launching himself on an enterprise equally characteristic of the confident spirit of the Renaissance—*The History of the World.* Raleigh worked on this mighty task for years, with the assistance of Ben Jonson and others, and left six massive volumes completed. It is interesting to-day only because of the light which it throws on the conception of history in that time, and as a monument of English prose, much of it wearisomely pedantic and irritatingly loose and inefficient, but rising at times into sombre eloquence, as in its concluding sentence:

> O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! Whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*

Raleigh was, of course, a great Elizabethan. One of the contrasts between that age and the seventeenth century is furnished by the fact that the typical historian of the latter period, Lord Clarendon, wrote a *History of the Rebellion*, of the events which he had lived through and the men whom he knew.

Sir Thomas Browne.

As Donne is the poet who belongs most essentially to the age, so of prose writers is Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682). In him the seventeenth-century "time-spirit" found curious but very noble expression. His mind was deeply tinged with melancholy, and he shared the prevalent tendency toward

religious mysticism. But these qualities are oddly infused with scepticism flowing from his scientific studies, a kind of dreamy, half-credulous scepticism, very different from Bacon's clear-cut rational view of things, but more characteristic of an age in which mediæval and modern ways of thought were still closely mingled together. After studying medicine at the famous schools of Montpellier in France and Padua in Italy, Browne settled as a physician at Norwich, in Norfolk, and there passed his life. In 1642 appeared his first work, *Religio Medici*, a confession of his own personal religious creed. It is in essence a mystical acceptance of Christianity. "Methinks," he says, "there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith . . . I love to lose myself in a mystery; to pursue my reason to an *O Altitudo!*"

His Characteristic Mood.

This sense of solemn exaltation, this losing of himself in a mystery and an *O Altitudo*, is Browne's most characteristic mood. He loves to stand before the face of the Eternal and the Infinite until the shows of life fade away, and he is filled with a passionate quietude and humility. We see in him how far the temper of men had departed from the Elizabethan zest of life, from the Renaissance delight in the stir and bustle of human activity. "Methinks," he says, "I begin to be weary of the sun. . . . The world to me is but a dream and mock-show, and we all therein but pantaloons and antics, to my severer contemplations."

The "Urn Burial."

While the mighty struggle which Lord Clarendon depicts in his *History of the Rebellion* was shaking the earth with its "drums and tramplings," Sir Thomas Browne was quietly writing his longest work, *Vulgar Errors* (1646), an inquiry, half-scientific and half-credulous, into various popular beliefs and superstitions. Twelve years later he published the *Urn Burial*, a short piece suggested by the finding of some ancient Roman funeral-urns buried in the earth in the neighborhood of Norwich. The *Urn Burial* is ostensibly

an inquiry into the various historic methods of disposing of the dead, but by implication it is a descant upon the vanity of earthly ambition, especially in its attempt to hand on mortal memory to future ages. It is Browne's most characteristic work, and contains perhaps the supreme examples of his style.

Browne's Style.

The grandeur and solemnity of this style, at its best, is hardly to be paralleled in English prose. Like almost all the writers of his age, Browne is extremely desultory and uneven; his "purple patches" come unexpectedly, but these occasional passages have a pomp and majesty which even Milton has not surpassed. His English is full of magniloquent words and phrases coined from the Latin, and the music of his periods is deep, stately, and long-drawn, like that of a heroic funeral march or the full-stop of a cathedral organ. The opening of the last section of the *Urn Burial* will serve perhaps to make these comparisons clear: "Now, since these dead bones have already outlasted the living ones of Methuselah, and in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, outworn all the strong and specious buildings above it; and quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests: what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his reliques?" The way in which his imagination plays through his thought and flashes a sudden illumination of beauty over his pages may be suggested by these words, written one night when he had sat late at his desk: "To keep our eyes open longer were but to act our Antipodes. The huntsmen are up in America!"

Burton and the "Anatomy of Melancholy."

A wide-spread national mood usually finds its analyst. The melancholy of the seventeenth century, its causes, its manifestations, and its cure, were exhaustively treated by Richard Burton (1577–1641) in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), a book into which he gathered the out-of-the-way learning and the dreamy speculation of fifty years of

recluse life at Brasenose College, Oxford. So curious a mixture of pedantry, imagination, and quiet, brooding humor, covering in a sense the whole life and thought of man, could hardly have been produced in any other era of English literature; as, indeed, no other era would have suggested "melancholy" as a theme for encyclopædic treatment.

Burton's *Anatomy* may be described as a personal essay, the reflection of a single interest in a curiously self-centred, shut-in personality. A work of the same nature, but utterly different in tone and spirit, is Walton's *Complete Angler* (1653). Izaak Walton was a London linen-draper, who spent his working days in measuring cloth and serving his customers over the shop counter; but who passed his holidays in quite another fashion, roaming with fishing-rod and basket along the banks of streams, and gazing with unspoiled eyes at the unspoiled peace and gayety of nature. His book is a delightful medley of personal reminiscence and sportsman's dissertation on the haunts and habits of fishes and ways of taking them.

Izaak Walton.

Walton contributed to the interest of the time in human life by writing his *Lives* of Donne, Herbert, Hooker, and others—the most charming pieces of contemporary portraiture which have come down to us. This interest manifested itself in a wide range, from generalized sketches of types, called *Characters*, which were written in great numbers by Sir Thomas Overbury and others, to minute autobiographical studies. Of these we have two which are of extreme interest. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, elder brother of the poet, has recorded in his *Autobiography* the life experience of a Cavalier—and John Bunyan in his *Grace Abounding* (see p. 194) that of a Puritan.

Biography and Autobiography.

The interest in conduct and etiquette, which we saw

manifesting itself so strongly in Elizabethan England, continued, but takes in part a new form responsive to the deeper religious tone of the time. Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667), who was a great preacher, a great controversialist on the Anglican side, and a master of sacred rhetoric, wrote two manuals, *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* (1650–1651), of which Hazlitt says: "It is a divine pastoral. He writes to the faithful followers of Christ as the shepherd pipes to his flock. . . . He makes life a procession to the grave, but crowns it with garlands, and rains sacrificial roses on its path."

Jeremy Taylor.

Thomas Fuller (1608–1661), who was also a royalist clergyman, in his *Holy State and Profane State* (1642) used the generalized character sketch to define virtue and vice in various walks of life, and then drew concrete examples from biography. His *Worthies of England* (1662) is a sort of biographical dictionary arranged by counties. Such works as these have survived, not only because of their intrinsic value, but because of the charm of their style, which reflects the quaint or brilliant personalities of their authors.

Thomas Fuller.

II

John Milton, after Shakespeare the greatest of English poets, was born December 9, 1608, in Bread Street, London. His father was a scrivener (notary public), who had embraced the Puritan faith, but whose Puritanism was not of the hard and forbidding type. The boy grew up in a home where music, literature, and the social graces gave warmth and color to an atmosphere of serene piety. During his boyhood England was still Elizabethan; among the great body of Puritans, geniality and zest of life had not yet given place to that harsh strenuousness which Puritanism afterward took on. Milton was taught music, and was

Milton's Early Life.

allowed to range at will through the English poets; among these Spenser, the poet of pure beauty, exercised over him a charm which was to leave its traces upon all the work of his early manhood. At Christ's College, Cambridge, whither he proceeded in his sixteenth year, he began to prepare himself with earnestness and consecration for the life of poetry. He had already determined to be a poet, and that, too, in no ordinary sense. His mind was fixed on lofty themes, and he believed that such themes could be fitly treated only by one who had led a lofty and austere life. The magnificent ode "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," which deals with the signs and portents filling the world at the Saviour's birth, was written at twenty-one. It showed clearly, or might have shown to any one who had eyes to see, that another mighty poet had been given to England.

At Horton.

Two years later Milton left Cambridge and went to Horton, a little village west of London, whither his father had retired to spend his declining days. Here, in a beautiful country of woods, meadows, and brimming streams, the young poet spent five quiet years. To the outward view he was all but idle, merely "turning over the Greek and Latin classics" in a long holiday. Really he was hard at work, preparing himself by meditation, by communion with nature and with the lofty spirits of the past, for some achievement in poetry which (to use his own words) England "would not willingly let die." Meanwhile he was writing very little, but that little perfect, thrice distilled. A sonnet sent to his friend on his twenty-third birthday shows that he was deeply dissatisfied with what he had done in verse before going to Horton; and indeed, if we except the Nativity Hymn, he had reason to be dissatisfied. The other poems of his college period are disfigured by the vices of conceitfulness, exaggeration, and tasteless ingenuity, peculiar to the seventeenth century. The

Hymn itself is marred by the same faults, and even its beauties are some of them plainly imitative. But at Horton Milton's taste gradually became surer, his touch upon the keys of his instrument superlatively firm and delicate. He went back to purer models, and learned how to borrow without imitating. The result was three long poems and several short ones, absolutely flawless in workmanship, full of romantic beauty curbed and chastened by a classical sense of proportion and fitness. It is in these poems that we first see clearly what Milton stands for in the poetic art of the century. He is a child of the Renaissance, the last of that great romantic line of which Spenser, Sidney, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Donne, and Fletcher are scions; but he has drunk deeper than the others of the springs of antique art; there is in him a more austere artistic instinct, linked somehow with his austerer moral nature. The spirit of his art is romantic; its expression is, in the widest sense, classic.

"L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso."

The first product of Milton's Horton period, the poem in two parts, "L'Allegro" (the joyous man) and "Il Penseroso" (the meditative man), is in its nature autobiographical. The two parts of the poem paint the two sides of Milton's own temperament: the one urging outward, toward communion with the brightness and vivid activity of life; the other drawing inward, toward lonely contemplation, or musings upon the dreamier, quieter aspects of nature and of human existence. To represent these two moods he imagines two typical youths, living each through a day of typical thoughts and pursuits, in the midst of surroundings harmonious with his special tastes. Taken together the two little poems give a view of the life which Milton led during the five happy years of his preparation for the poetic ministry, wonderfully compressed, clarified, and fixed in permanent symbols.

The next two poems of this period were in masque form;

one a fragment, *Arcades*, the other a complete masque, taking its title from the chief character, "Comus," god of revelry. *Comus* was written at the request of Milton's friend, Henry Lawes, a musician, who supplied the music, and played the part of the Attendant Spirit when the masque was presented (1634) in the castle of Ludlow, on the Welsh border. The "plot" of *Comus* is simple and very effective, affording just a touch of the fantastic mythological element needed for scenic display, yet leaving the main interest of the piece to centre upon the rich, serious poetry which Milton puts into the mouths of his few characters. Two brothers and a sister, astray by night in the forest, become separated; the girl is taken captive by Comus, and is led to the place where he dwells, surrounded by strange half-bestial creatures whom he has transformed. He attempts to work upon her the same transformation. She resists him, refusing to yield to the allurements of sense, and is at length rescued by her brothers and an "attendant spirit," who takes the guise of their father's shepherd. It was characteristic of Milton that he should have put a serious moral lesson into a form of spectacular and lyric entertainment usually of the most frivolous kind. Fortunately, his power as an artist was so developed that he could charge the delicate texture of his masque with ethical doctrine, without at all marring its airy beauty.

"Comus."

When *Comus* was written, the Puritans and the court party were already drifting toward open conflict. The influences of the Renaissance, for which the court party largely stood, were losing force; and the moral enthusiasms flowing from the Reformation were meanwhile growing narrower and intenser, in that other element of the nation, the Puritan party, where they had taken deepest hold. An atmosphere of moral strenuousness, soon to deepen into sternness, and then into hard fanaticism, had begun

Deepening Seriousness of Milton's Work.

to spread over England, affecting in one way or another the vital spirits of all men. In *Comus* this moral strenuousness finds expression, though in the most unobtrusive manner. In the last poem of Milton's Horton period, "Lycidas," written in 1637, there is sounded a sterner note, a note of austere indignation and fierce warning against the corruptions which had crept into the church.

"Lycidas" is an elegy upon the death of Edward King, a college-mate of Milton's, drowned in the Irish Sea. King had been, in his way, a poet; and it was a fixed convention, among the poets of the pastoral school, to represent themselves and their art under the guise of the shepherd life. When Milton, therefore, represents himself and his dead friend as shepherds driving their flocks, and piping for fauns and satyrs to dance; when he calls the sea-nymphs and the gods of the wind to task for the disaster of his fellow-shepherd's death—he merely makes use of a form of thought bequeathed to him through Spenser, Fletcher, and Browne, from a long succession of earlier poets. But he does not rest content with this; he adds to it another kind of symbolism, not pagan but Christian. King, besides being a poet, had been a preacher, or at least had been in preparation for the ministry. He was therefore not only a shepherd under Apollo, but a shepherd under Christ; a keeper of the souls of men which are the flocks of the Good Shepherd. This second symbolism Milton boldly identifies with the first, for to him the poet and the preacher were one in spiritual aim. Still more boldly, in the strange procession of classic and pseudoclassic divinities whom he summons to mourn over Lycidas, he includes Saint Peter, the bearer of the keys of the church; and he puts in his mouth words of solemn wrath against those "blind mouths," those worldly churchmen who,

"Lycidas."

> for their bellies' sake
> Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold;

closing with a shadowy menace of the punishment which is soon to overtake the ecclesiastical corruption of the age. "Lycidas" gathers up all the iridescent color and varied music of Milton's youthful verse, indeed, of the whole Spenserian school; and at the same time, by virtue of the moral passion which burns in it, it looks forward to the period of public combat into which the poet was about to plunge.

Milton's Public Life: His Prose Writings.

The twenty years of Milton's life as a public disputant we must pass over hurriedly. They were preceded by a period of travel abroad (1638–1639), chiefly in Italy, during which he met Galileo, was entertained by the Italian literary academies, and pondered much upon a projected epic poem on the subject of King Arthur's wars, a subject suggested to him by the epics of Tasso and Ariosto. His return was hastened by news of King Charles's expedition against the Scots, a step whose seriousness Milton well knew. Once back in London, he was drawn into a pamphlet war on the vexed question of episcopacy. Then followed his ill-starred marriage, and the writing of his pamphlets on divorce; these were received with astonishment and execration by his countrymen, who did not see that Milton was only bringing to bear, upon one issue of domestic life, that free spirit of question everywhere being applied to public institutions, and everywhere spreading change through the social fabric of England. Another signal illustration of Milton's revolutionary questioning followed, in the shape of an attack upon the censorship of the press. The time-honored institution of the censorship he saw to be an intolerable hindrance to freedom of thought; in a pamphlet entitled *Areopagitica* (1644) he launched against it all the thunders and lightnings of his magnificent rhetoric. On the execution of the King (1649) Milton was the first to lift up his voice, amid the hush and awe of consternation, in defense of the deed.

His pamphlet *On the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* was of such timely service to the Commonwealth party that he was offered the position of Latin secretary to Cromwell's government, his duties being to indite correspondence with foreign powers, and to reply to attacks by foreign pamphleteers of importance. In the midst of a controversy of this sort his eyes failed, and in a short time he was totally blind. He continued his duties, with Andrew Marvell as his assistant, until 1658. After the Restoration in 1660, Milton was forced to go into hiding, and he barely escaped paying with his life for his fearless support of the ideals and actions of the Commonwealth party.

"Paradise Lost."

Ever since his college days Milton had been looking forward to undertaking some work of poetry large enough to give scope to all his power. By 1642 he had virtually decided upon the subject of the fall of Adam, though he at first intended to treat the subject in the form of a drama. During the sixteen years between 1642 and his dismissal from the Latin secretaryship in 1658, this subject was seldom long absent from his mind. In the midst of the "noises and hoarse disputes" into which he had thrown himself for patriotic service, the only poetic production which he allowed himself was a small group of sonnets, written at rare intervals and dealing for the most part with passing events. Except for these, he had hidden "that one talent which is death to hide," but he more than once turned aside in his pamphlets to throw out a proud hint concerning the work laid upon him by the "great Taskmaster," of adding something majestic and memorable to the treasury of English verse. Meanwhile his chosen subject lay in his mind, gradually taking form, and gathering to itself the riches of long study and reflection. When at last his duty as a patriot was done, he turned at once to his deferred task. Forced to seek shelter from the storm

of the royalist reaction, he carried with him into his hiding-place the opening book of *Paradise Lost*, begun two years earlier. The poem was finished by 1665, and was published by an obscure printer in 1667.

The Vastness of Its Scheme.

The central theme of *Paradise Lost*, namely, the fall of Adam from a state of innocence into a state of sin, occupies a relatively small space in the whole scheme of the poem. The action begins[1] in heaven, before man is created, or the earth and its ministering spheres are hung out in space. The rebellion of Lucifer against the omnipotent ruler of heaven; the defeat of the rebel armies and their casting down into the dreary cavern of hell, which has been carved out of chaos to be their prison-house; the creation of the terrestrial universe and the setting of man in the garden of Eden to take the place of the apostate angels in God's affection; the expedition of Lucifer from hell to earth for the purpose of beguiling the innocent pair; the going and coming of God's messengers and sentinels—all this constitutes a vast drama of which the actual temptation and fall of Adam is only an episode. With the exception of Dante no modern mind has conceived an action so immense, or set a world-drama on a stage of such sublime dimensions.

The Concreteness of Its Imagery.

In spite of this vastness of scheme, however, Milton's imagination does not take refuge in vagueness. His imagery is everywhere concrete, in places startlingly vivid and tangible. It may even be urged against the poem that some things are presented with an exactness of delineation which detracts from their power to awe the mind; but broadly speaking, the poet's ability to evoke clear and

[1] In the approved epic manner, Milton opens his poem in the middle of the action, after the rebellious angels have been cast down into hell. The earlier events are given in retrospective narrative by the archangel Raphael and by Adam.

rememberable pictures of more than titanic size, and to make his cosmic drama as clear to our mental vision as are the natural sights of earth, gives to his work its most enduring claim upon our interest. Upon the theology of the poem time has laid its finger; a part of it thoughtful men now reject, or interpret in a far different sense from Milton's. The blind Puritan bard hardly succeeded, even to the satisfaction of his own day, in his avowed intention to

> assert Eternal providence
> And justify the ways of God to men,

for his religion was a special creed, made up in part of perishable dogmas. But by the imperishable sublimity of the pictures which he has given to our imaginations, he has asserted Providence in another sense, and justified God in the glory of the human mind He created.

Milton's "Sublimity."

The word "sublimity," so often abused, has in the case of Milton's later work real fitness. It was a quality to which he attained only after years of stern experience; it was the reward of his long renunciation of his art in the interest of his country. There are suggestions of it in his youthful hymn on the Nativity, and one passage of "Lycidas" attains it:

> Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
> Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
> Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
> Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
> Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
> Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
> Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
> Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
> Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.

These lines, taken in their proper connection, achieve that synthesis of the majestic and the mysterious which

we call sublimity. They show that the quality was native to Milton's mind. But it is highly probable that without those years of stern repression, when his imagination was held back by his will, gaining momentum like the dammed-up waters of a stream, he would never have attained that peculiar mightiness of imagery and phrase which causes *Paradise Lost* to deserve, as does perhaps no other work of literature, the epithet sublime. Of course, this sublimity Milton gained only at the expense of some qualities of his youthful work which we would fain have had him keep. Grace, lightness, airy charm—these had gone from him forever when he took up his art again after his long silence. The art of "L'Allegro" and *Comus*, responsive and sinuous as the tracery of dancing figures about a Greek vase, had given place to an art as massive and strenuous as the frescoes of Michael Angelo, depicting the solemn scenes of the creation and destruction of the world.

The change in the quality of thought and imagery is, of course, accompanied by a change in style. Blank verse

The Verse of "Paradise Lost."

Milton deliberately chose as the most severe of English measures; having chosen it, he proceeded to build out of it a type of verse before unknown, admirably suited to the grandeur of his subject. The chief peculiarity of this Miltonic verse is the length and involution of period. The sense is held suspended through many lines, while clause after clause comes in to enrich the meaning or to magnify the descriptive effect; then the period closes, and this suspended weight of meaning falls upon the mind like the combing mass of a breaker on the shore. A second and scarcely less important characteristic (though hardly so novel) is the extreme variety of pause; the sense comes to an end, and the suspended thought falls, at constantly varying places in the line, a device by which blank verse, monotonous when otherwise treated, becomes the most

diversified of rhythms. In these and other ways Milton made for himself a sublime verse-instrument to match his sublime imagery and theme. The music of the Horton poems, compared with that of *Paradise Lost,* is like the melody of the singing voice beside the manifold harmonies of an orchestra, or the rolling chant of a cathedral organ.

"Paradise Regained."

In 1671, four years after the publication of *Paradise Lost*, appeared Milton's third volume of verse. (The college and Horton poems had been published in 1645.) It consisted of *Paradise Regained*, a supplement to *Paradise Lost;* and of *Samson Agonistes*, a drama in the Greek manner, on an Old Testament subject which Milton had thought of treating nearly thirty years before. *Paradise Regained* deals with Christ's temptation by Satan in the Wilderness. In his first epic Milton had shown how mankind, in the person of Adam, falls before the wiles of the Tempter, and becomes an outcast from divine grace; in his second he shows how mankind, in the person of Jesus, wins readmission to divine grace by withstanding the hellish adversary. By general consent *Paradise Regained* is given a much lower place than *Paradise Lost*, in spite of passages that rise to an impressive height. The poet's weariness is manifest; his epic vein seems exhausted.

"Samson Agonistes."

Samson Agonistes, however, a venture in a new field of poetry, shows Milton's genius at its subtlest and maturest. His desire was to bring over into English the gravity and calm dignity of the Greek tragedies; and, avoiding the lifeless effect of previous experiments of the sort, to give to his grave and calm treatment the passion, the conviction, the kindling breath without which poetry cannot exist. Two circumstances made this not only easy, but almost inevitable for him. In the first place his character, lofty and ardent to begin with, had now under misfortune and sacrifice

taken on just that serene and melancholy gravity peculiar to the great tragic poets of antiquity. In the second place, the story of Samson was, in a sense, his own story. Like Samson he had fought against the Philistines with the strength of thirty men; he had taken a wife from among his enemies and suffered bitter loss at her hands; he sat now, blind and dishonored, amid the triumph of the Cavaliers, as Samson among the holiday-making Philistines. As he wrote, his own personal bitterness found veiled expression; and the grand choruses, with their dark and smothered music, pulsate with personal feeling.

Milton's Last Years.

Milton lived for three years after the publication of his last poems. Much of his patrimony had disappeared in the readjustments of the Restoration, and in the great London fire of 1666; but he was still able to live in modest comfort. The painter Richardson gives us a glimpse of the poet during his last years, as he was led about the streets clad in a gray camblet coat, or as he sat in a gray coarse cloth coat at the door of his house, near Bunhill Fields, to receive visitors. "Lately," continues Richardson, "I had the good fortune to have another picture of him from an aged clergyman in Dorsetshire. In a small house . . . up one pair of stairs, which was hung with rusty green, he found John Milton, sitting in an elbow chair; black clothes, and neat enough; pale but not cadaverous, his hands and fingers gouty and with chalkstones." When we compare the figure thus suggested with the portrait painted in his twenty-first year, we realize how far and under what public and private stress, Milton had travelled from the world of his youth. In making himself over from Elizabethan to Cromwellian he had suffered much and renounced much; he had lost many of those genial human qualities which have won for less worthy natures a warmth of love denied to his austerity. But if we deny him love, we cannot help feeling an admiration mixed

with awe, for the loftiness and singleness of aim, the purity and depth of moral passion, which make him conspicuous even among the men of those moving times.

The deep voice of Milton rolled on its interrupted song more than a decade after the chorus of romantic poetry had been hushed, and men had turned away to listen to the new "classical" message of Dryden and the poets of precision. In like manner the fervid and imaginative prose of the first half of the century survives into the Restoration period in the work of John Bunyan, a late but very striking exponent of the religious revival which had begun more than a century before to stir the conscience of Northern Europe. Bunyan, the rude tinker of Elstow, who produced, without learning or literary example, one of the unique masterpieces of imaginative English prose, can only be understood by reference to another and greater literary phenomenon of the seventeenth century, the Authorized Version of the Bible. This version was made by order of James I; the work was divided among numerous churchmen of his appointment, and was finished in 1611. The translators used not only the original Hebrew and Greek texts and the Latin Vulgate, but also the various English translations, from Wyclif down. They succeeded in blending together the peculiar excellences of all these, with the result that we possess in the King James Bible a monument of English prose holding of no particular age, but gathering up into itself the strength and sweetness of all ages.

Bunyan.

The King James Bible.

The influence of this mighty book upon the literature of the seventeenth century, although great, was restricted by two circumstances. In the first place, the Bible was early monopolized by the Puritan party; and biblical phraseology and imagery became associated with an ideal of life which, at least in the grim and ascetic form it assumed under James and Charles, was distasteful to most

Its Influence upon the Literature of the Century.

of the makers of literature. In the second place, Latin was still held in superstitious reverence among cultivated men; and writers went to that language for instruction, neglecting the ruder but more vital excellences abounding in the prose of the Bible. Bunyan, however, was at once a Puritan of the Puritans, an instinctive artist, and an unlearned man, to whom Latin was only a name. Hence the grandeur, simplicity, and force of biblical prose, acting without any interference upon his passionately earnest imagination, made him, all unknown to himself, a great writer.

Upon Bunyan.

John Bunyan (1628–1688) was born in the village of Elstow, Bedfordshire. His father was a tinker, a trade then considered little above vagabondage. After a slight schooling, and a short experience of soldiering in the Civil War (on which side is unknown), he married a wife as poor as himself, and took up his father's trade of pot and kettle mender. Before this, however, there had begun in him a spiritual struggle so terrible and so vivid, as we see it in the pages of his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (published 1665), that by contrast the events of his outer life are pallid and unreal. As he wrestled and played at tip-cat with his village mates on the green, or stood in the tower of the church to watch the bell-ringing, he was haunted by thoughts of sudden death, of the Judgment Day, and of his soul's damnation. He saw an awful face looking down from the clouds, and heard a voice asking whether he would leave his sins and go to heaven, or have his sins and go to hell. The tiles upon the house-roofs, the puddles in the road, spoke to him with voices of temptation and mockery. From this religious insanity he was rescued by a Mr. Gifford, a local preacher, who gave him comfort and courage. Soon Bunyan himself began to preach; and a revulsion of feeling now lifted him to heights of ecstatic joy in the mercifulness of God

His Religious Struggles: "Grace Abounding."

and the beauty of holiness. He saw Christ himself looking down at him through the tiles of the house-roof, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee"; and the sense of salvation came like a "sudden noise of wind rushing in at the window, but very pleasant." In all this we see in its most intense form the religious excitement of the seventeenth century, and also the qualities of imagination and feeling which make Bunyan so powerful a writer.

Later Life: "Pilgrim's Progress."

At the Restoration, persecution of the nonconformist sects began. Bunyan was arrested for holding illegal religious meetings; and he spent the next twelve years in confinement, earning bread for his family by putting tags to shoe-laces, and keeping his mind awake by writing what he was no longer at liberty to speak. After his release in 1672 he was subjected to shorter terms of arrest, during one of which he expanded the trite metaphor of a journey to typify the Christian life into a book, and *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of the three great allegories of the world's literature,[1] was written. He published it in 1678.

Its Subject-Matter.

It furnished the simple Bedfordshire cottagers for whom it was written with a reflection of their own inmost struggles and aspirations, in a form which combined the fascinations of the novel, the fairy-tale, and the romance of adventure. The novel, the great literary discovery of the next century, appears here in its germ. Not only is the physical world through which Christian journeys from the "Wicket-gate" to the Land of Beulah pictured with the most familiar realism; but the wayfarers whom he meets are such as might have been seen in Bunyan's day on any English market road—portly Mr. Worldly-Wiseman, full of prudential saws; blundering, self-confident young Ignorance; "gentlemanlike" Demas, and sweet, talkative

[1] The others alluded to are Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Piety. The landscape, the houses, the people, are all given with quaint, sturdy strokes which stamp them upon the memory forever; so that it is almost impossible for a reader of *Pilgrim's Progress* to think of the journey otherwise than as a real personal experience. And added to the charm which the book has as realism is its charm as romance. If, in one sense, it may be said to have ushered in the eighteenth-century novel, in another it may be said to have revived the mediæval romance, in which the hero was made to contend against dangers natural and supernatural, on the way to the goal of his desires. Giant Despair in his grim castle, the obscene devils creeping and muttering in the Valley of the Shadow, the dreadful enemy Apollyon, the angels and archangels who lead the way, with harpings and hosannas, from the dread River of Death to the shining gates of the Celestial City, give to the story an element of marvel and adventure which immensely increases its appeal. If we add to this the charm of its style, so quaintly graphic, so humorously direct, so tender and rich and lyrical when the author is moved by the beauty of his vision, it seems no matter for surprise that *Pilgrim's Progress*, before Bunyan's death, was read with delight, not only throughout England, but in France, in Holland, and in the far-off colonies of America,

Its Style.

Bunyan's later work included the Second Part of *Pilgrim's Progress*, which narrates the journey of Bunyan's wife, Christiana, and her children to the Celestial City, under the guidance of Mr. Greatheart. He wrote also another allegory called *The Holy War* (1682), which represents the Christian life under the figure of warfare instead of a journey. Most notable, however, is the antitype of Christian presented in *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* (1680). Here Bunyan adopts the form of a dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. The former narrates the

Bunyan's Later Work.

progress through sin to unhallowed death of an unregenerate boy and man, who from lying and Sabbath-breaking descends to fraudulent bankruptcy, drunkenness, and vice—a rogue story with a moral purpose, and a very real study of middle-class corruption in a provincial town like Bedford. It is this realism which makes the work a forerunner of the novels of Defoe in the next century.

End of the Romantic Literature of the Century.

As *Paradise Lost* is the epic of Puritanism in its external and theological aspect, *Pilgrim's Progress* is the epic of Puritanism in its inner and emotional phases. They are together the two great final products of that intellectual and artistic revival which we call the Renaissance, and of that religious revival which we call the Reformation. They mark the end of the stream of literature which flows down into the second half of the seventeenth century from its source in the later reign of Henry VIII and in the early Elizabethan age. We must now turn to consider a stream of literature of a very different kind, which began in a revolt against the extravagance and formlessness of the reigning "romantic" style, and which at the Restoration assumed an authority which it maintained uninterruptedly for nearly a hundred years.

CHAPTER IX

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: THE RESTORATION

The Restoration.

THE date 1660 is one of the most significant in the history of English literature, as it is in the history of English politics. In that year Charles II was brought to the throne from which his father had been driven. The extravagant joy with which the King was received on his return from exile showed how closely this change of government from commonwealth to kingship corresponded to a change in the mood of the nation. The passionate absorption in other-worldliness, which was the essence of Puritanism, had, as we have seen, checked the frank delight in this world, and interest in the problem of living successfully there, which were of the Renaissance. But the Puritan ideal, by its very nature, could appeal directly to comparatively few. Indirectly, indeed, by force of example, it influenced many; but the multitude at length grew weary of playing a part so exhausting and so difficult. During the latter years of the Commonwealth signs of a relaxed temper on the part of the public were not lacking; for example, licenses were given for operas to be performed in London. When at length the leaders of the Commonwealth forsook their own ideal and confessed its failure, the mass of the nation turned with relief to the pleasures and interests of the present world, ready to regard with complacency even the excesses that characterized the court of Charles II.

The Restoration period must not be thought of, however, as a continuation of the interrupted Renaissance.

Between them there is an important difference. In the age of Elizabeth, as in the age of Charles II and his successors, the leading motive was indeed the exhibition of physical and mental power on the stage of this life, but the Elizabethan thought of this life not as limited and contracted by circumstances and conditions, but as having unmeasured possibilities. Not only the geographical world, but the intellectual world, also, was being enlarged and thrown open. The bounds of human thought, as well as those of human activity, seemed infinitely remote; the imagination dealing with power, as in Marlowe, or with knowledge, as in Bacon, took wings to itself and flew. But in the temperament of the Restoration period there was dependence on the resources of actual life, without faith in the extension of those resources. There was the disposition to accept the present in its narrow sense, to exploit life on the narrow grounds that circumstances afforded.

Difference between the Period of the Restoration and that of the Renaissance.

This sense of present fact, of realism, as distinguished from the transcendentalism of Renaissance and Puritan thought, is the chief characteristic of the mood of the century which succeeded the Restoration. In science it showed itself in an absorption in the details of investigation, as opposed to the generalizations of Bacon. In politics it showed itself in the interest in actual conditions, as opposed to dreams of theocracy. In all directions it appeared as a disposition toward conservatism and moderation. Men had learned to fear individual enthusiasm, and therefore they tried to discourage it by setting up ideals of conduct in accordance with reason and common sense, to which all men should adapt themselves. They tried to look alike, to behave alike, to write alike. Rules of etiquette and social conventions were established, and the problem of life became that of self-expres-

Characteristics of the Restoration Period.

sion within the narrow bounds which were thus prescribed.

Restoration Literature.

The literature of the period reflects these tendencies. On its serious side it is largely concerned with politics, that is, with the effort of men to organize the state, and to give it power sufficient to restrain individual ambition. The lighter literature reflects the interest of men in learning to live with one another. Naturally, it is much concerned with life in town, and with details of dress and manners which are important there. But the most noteworthy evidence of the temper of the time in literature is the tacit agreement of writers, both in prose and poetry, upon rules and principles in accordance with which they should write. The acceptance of these literary conventions drawn from the practice of writers of the past, marks the difference between the *classic* age of Dryden and Pope, and the *romantic*, individualistic epoch of Spenser and Shakespeare.

The Influence of France.

In this difference the influence of France counted for much. There the reaction against the poetic license of the Renaissance had set in somewhat earlier, at the time when Henry IV and Richelieu were laying foundations for the reconstruction of the French monarchy; and represents a sort of corresponding establishment of order and discipline in literature. The influence of Corneille and Racine, who developed a drama on the lines of Latin tragedy, succeeding where the English classicists of the sixteenth century had signally failed, and of Molière, who developed realistic comedy, in prose and verse, is important. It must be remembered that many Englishmen of the class which cared for literature and the stage spent years of exile in France, and naturally came to accept the principles of French taste. Through the new artistic conceptions brought back to England by the exiles, French influence upon English literature, especially upon the English drama, was strengthened. To their notions of

refinement the license of the older dramatists seemed uncouth. "I have seen Hamlet," wrote Evelyn, "but now these old plays begin to disgust this refined century, since their majesties have been so long abroad." Altogether, though English literature of the Restoration is a genuine native growth, in accordance with tendencies which can be discerned in the early seventeenth century, particularly in the work of Ben Jonson, yet the example of France, like that of Italy at an earlier period, was important in giving definiteness to movements which otherwise might have been tentative and hesitating.

The most striking way in which English poetry reflected the spirit of the new era was in its substitution of a single measurably perfect form for the varied lawlessness of the age which had gone before. This form, called the heroic couplet, consisted of two pentameter lines connected by rhyme. It had been used in earlier periods, for example by Chaucer; but in his hands the couplet had not been necessarily a unit, the thought having often been drawn out into the succeeding pair of verses, with no pause at the rhyming word. And in the period of romanticism which followed the eighteenth century the couplet was once more used with the old freedom. The literary ideals of the Restoration, as contrasted with those of the romantic school, may be illustrated by the comparison of a few lines from Keats, such as these from the beginning of *Endymion:*

The Heroic Couplet.

> A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing;

with these from *The Hind and the Panther* of Dryden:

> A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,
> Fed on the lawns, and in the forest rang'd;
> Without unspotted, innocent within,
> She fear'd no danger for she knew no sin.

In the first, it is clear, the couplet exerts little control over the thought; in the second the thought is limited and regulated by the acceptance of a precise and narrow form; and this limitation and regulation were of the essence of Restoration poetry.

Among the first writers to use consistently the closed couplet was Edmund Waller (1605–1687). As early as 1623, in lines on "His Majesty's Escape at Saint Andrew," he set the steady, measured step which succeeding poets were to follow with military precision for more than a century. His influence, however, became predominant only through the extraordinary energy and success of his pupil, the greatest literary figure of the age of Charles II, John Dryden.

Edmund Waller.

Dryden was born in 1631 at Aldwinkle, in Northamptonshire, his parents being of the upper middle class, and of Puritan sympathies. He was sent to Westminster School, and thence, in 1650, to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained seven years. During this time his father died, leaving him a small property. His first important verse was an elegy on the death of Cromwell, written in 1658. Two years later, however, Dryden, with the mass of Englishmen, had become an ardent Royalist; and he welcomed the return of Charles in a poem in couplets called *Astræa Redux*. In 1663 he married Lady Elizabeth Howard, a woman of higher rank than his own. It may have been the desirability of increasing his income that, just before this marriage, drove Dryden to write his first comedy, *The Wild Gallant*. It certainly was his accumulating financial necessities that kept him writing for the stage constantly down to 1681. During this period his only poem of importance was *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), a chronicle of events of the preceding year, which had been distinguished by several victories at sea over the Dutch, and by the great London fire.

Dryden's Early Life.

In 1681 Dryden began the succession of political poems which have generally been accounted his best works. The times were troubled. The court and the country were divided between the partisans of the King's brother, who, though a Papist, was recognized as the heir to the throne, and those of the King's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, whom certain persons zealous for the Protestant faith were disposed to set up as a rival candidate. The leader of the latter party was the Earl of Shaftesbury. In the story of the revolt of Absalom against King David, Dryden found an apt parallel to existing circumstances in England; and his satire *Absalom and Achitophel* exposed the relations of Monmouth, the prince, and Shaftesbury, the evil counsellor, with merciless humor. The poem became immensely popular. The next year Dryden followed it with a second blow at Shaftesbury in *The Medal*. Then he turned aside in *MacFlecknoe* to attack a rival poet, Shadwell, who had been employed by the Whigs to reply to *The Medal*. In this year, also, Dryden extended his range into the field of religious controversy, with *Religio Laici*, a very temperate statement of a layman's faith in the Church of England. Three years after this confession of faith Dryden became a Roman Catholic, and in 1687 he published a political defense of the Church of Rome called *The Hind and the Panther*.

His Satires.

This political and religious writing brought him distinction and a modest income. In 1670 he was made Historiographer Royal and Poet Laureate, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year. Later he received a pension of a hundred pounds a year, and in 1683 he was made Collector of the Port of London. All these honors and emoluments he lost in consequence of the Revolution of 1688 and the accession of William III. He was obliged to betake himself again to the stage as the most lucrative department

His Later Works.

of literature; to accept aid from private patrons in place of the royal bounty; to contract with Tonson, the bookseller, to produce and deliver ten thousand lines of verse for three hundred guineas, and to undertake various jobs of translation for the same employer. In short, in his old age Dryden was compelled to illustrate almost all the methods by which a literary man could live. Nevertheless, his production in these years added much to his fame. Whatever may be thought of his poetical qualities, at least his literary energy lasted well. His work of this time includes his translation of Virgil; many of his translations from Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, Persius, and Homer; and his renderings into modern English verse of stories from Chaucer, among which the *Palamon and Arcite* is best known. These twice-told tales were published in 1700, in a volume of *Fables*.

His Last Years.

During these last years Dryden lived constantly in London. The coffee-house of that day was the chief place of resort for literary men, much as the Paris café has been in the nineteenth century. At Will's or Button's the wits gathered for exchange of courtesies or for combat; there their admirers or patrons met them, and thence went forth the criticism that made or marred the fortunes of rising men as surely as do the anonymous reviews in a modern literary journal. Dryden frequented Will's, where he was as much a monarch as Ben Jonson had been at the Mermaid, or as, a century later, Samuel Johnson was at the Literary Club. It was to Will's that young Pope was brought to gaze on greatness and be inspired; and it was there also that Dryden dismissed his youthful relative with the pitying "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet."

The life of Dryden seems at first sight to have been an unheroic, and in some ways an ignoble, one. His changes of side from Cromwellian to Royalist, from Anglican to Catholic, stand out in unfavorable contrast to the de-

votion of men like More and Milton. His concern with the details of party strife is sharply opposed to the ideal morality of Sidney and of Spenser. His indifference and acquiescence in matters of belief seem tame and watery after the flame-like faith of Bunyan. But we must not let such comparisons carry us too far. Dryden illustrates the change from the virtues of Elizabethan chivalry and Cromwellian fanaticism to the sober commonplace ethics of an era of reason. His tendency to shift his influence to the winning side was in part the patriotism of a sensible man who argued that it mattered comparatively little whether the country was ruled by Protector or King, whether it worshipped according to Anglican or Catholic rites, so long as it was at peace under institutions which were strong enough to curb individual turbulence. Moreover, to Dryden it doubtless seemed far less important that he should preserve an unspotted consistency in his life, than that he should support his family. His was at bottom that uninspiring but necessary virtue which chiefly seeks to do useful work for a living wage.

His Character.

There is also a temptation to extend the first harsh judgment of Dryden's life to his poetry. It, too, lacks elevation. In the first place the material of much of it is borrowed from other writers. But we must remember that in his long labors of translation and adaptation, Dryden was fulfilling the requirements of his age. The time was one not of creation, but of criticism; one of steady assimilation of what earlier ages had produced. It was especially eager in its effort to diffuse and appropriate the ideals of Latin civilization, and in this diffusion the work of Dryden counted for much. In the second place, the subject-matter of his original poetry, the affairs of church and state, is remote from what we regard as poetic. But here again Dryden was responding to the demands of his age.

The Substance of His Poetry.

In the days of Charles II men were weary of revolution. To them the kingship and the church, Anglican or Catholic, were interesting and beautiful, because they represented, for the mass of the nation, an ideal of individual restraint; just as to an earlier time the boundless self-assertion of Faustus and Tamburlaine had been interesting and beautiful for the opposite reason.

The Quality of His Poetry.

Not only the substance but the form of Dryden's verse has been a ground for detraction from his fame. Few poets of the modern world have maintained such strict uniformity. With the exception of the lyrics in his dramas, of several odes, and of two early poems in the heroic stanza, Dryden cultivated steadily the heroic couplet. Historically the account of this form has been given (page 201). The heroic couplet appealed with irresistible force to an age weary of the conceits of feeble romanticists, and desiring, above all, uniformity, precision, and regularity. It was, moreover, a vehicle strikingly adapted to the conveyance of the literary baggage of the time. When at the close of *Religio Laici* Dryden says,

> "And this unpolished rugged verse I chose
> As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose,

his second line may be taken as referring to his poems in general. In them we look for the virtues of prose rather than for those of poetry, for the utilitarian qualities, neatness, clearness, energy, rather than for imaginative suggestion; we look for epigram in place of metaphor, for boldly marked rhythm instead of elusive harmony.

Although in the great body of his work Dryden kept to the couplet form, his odes, and the songs with which his dramas are strewn, show that he possessed power over a variety of metres. The two odes for Saint Cecilia's day, especially the second, called "Alexander's Feast," illustrate his skill in making his lines march to the mea-

sure of his thought. It is true, even in his lyrics Dryden's charm is rather one of line and general movement than of phrase or word. He has little of the magic and glamour that belong to poets of deeper, though perhaps less ample, inspiration. His best quality is artistic and literary, not imaginative.

Dryden as Critic.

Dryden was not only the foremost poet, but also the most copious dramatist, and the chief critic of his time. The age of the Restoration was, as we have already noted, a period of assimilation rather than of creation, a time when men were interested in testing the product of earlier ages, and in winnowing the good from the bad. This interest accounts for the fact that to many of his works Dryden prefixed one or more critical essays in the form of dedications or prefaces, in which he discussed the leading artistic questions of the day. Among these essays the most important are "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1668), "A Defense of an Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1668), "Of Heroic Plays" (1672), the "Essay on Satire" (1693), and the Preface to the *Fables* (1700). It is to be noted that these writings were all "occasional," each put forth to answer a particular purpose; and in the success with which they fulfilled their purpose they are one important sign of literary progress. The virtue of efficiency in prose style was strengthened enormously by Dryden's practice.

Dryden's Prose.

Dryden's prose lacks the personal eccentricity which we find in Burton, Browne, and their contemporaries; and it is usually without the artificial decoration which marks the style of Lyly and Sidney. He was chiefly occupied in securing its fitness for a well-defined end. Moreover, by his adoption of the modern sentence in place of the unit of great and unequal length used by Raleigh and Milton, Dryden carried out in prose a change exactly analogous to that ac-

complished in verse by his adoption of the couplet in place of the stanza. In other words, he did for prose what he did for poetry: he reduced the unit of treatment to manageable size; set an example of correctness; and finally, by his authority, did much to establish such a standard of taste as rendered impossible the eccentricities to which the preceding century had been indulgent.

Butler's "Hudibras."

In both his poetry and his prose Dryden represents the spirit of his age as it showed itself in dealing with its most important problems of life and art. He is at bottom a serious and intellectual master. For the more naïve and unconscious expression of the time we must turn to others. Like Elizabeth and Charles I, Charles II kept in some sort a literary court, of which lyric poetry and satire were the language. The courtly poets of the time, the successors of the Cavaliers, caught from the King an attitude of moral indifference and social flippancy. In their circles the most popular work was a fierce and scurrilous satire upon the Puritan, Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*. Butler (1612–1680) was doubtless meditating his attack during the years of the Protectorate, when he was acting as private secretary to a Puritan nobleman. Three years after the accession of Charles II he published three cantos of a poem in which the vices of the Puritan period, hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness, and intolerance, are presented with savage exaggeration in the person of Sir Hudibras. *Hudibras* is in effect a piece of that character writing which was popular in the seventeenth century (see page 180), and of which Butler left many examples. It is written in rough verse of four feet, with double rhymes for humorous effect, very different from the polished heroic couplet of Dryden's satire. Some of the more trenchant comments on Puritan defects have passed into proverbs, as:

> Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to.

It is also a mock heroic romance after the type of *Don Quixote*. Like his prototype, Hudibras, with his squire Ralpho, falls into one ridiculous situation after another, which are continued in further instalments of the poem, published in 1664 and 1678.

While Butler and the Cavalier poets were embodying the mood of the aristocracy, Bunyan was writing his *Pilgrim's Progress* for the serious lower class, where Puritanism still survived. Between these extremes, however, we have an order that was to make its presence felt increasingly from this time on, the middle or burgher class; and as it happens, this class had, in the late seventeenth century, a representative figure almost as salient as Bunyan. Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) was a busy man of affairs, a clerk of the Navy Board, and later Secretary of the Admiralty under James II. Between 1660 and 1669 he kept a diary in cipher, which he left with his library to Magdalen College, Cambridge. It was deciphered and published, at first with omissions, later in full, in the course of the nineteenth century, and was recognized at once as a personal document of great interest.

Samuel Pepys.

Pepys's diary is scarcely to be called literature. It is a transcript of the observations, doings, thoughts, and feelings of a commonplace burgher, all set down with the greatest fidelity. If Pepys goes on a picnic he mentions the time of starting, the constituents of the luncheon, the substance of the conversation by the way, the company he met, the sheep which he saw ("the most pleasant and innocent sight that ever I saw in my life"), the shepherd whose little boy was reading the Bible to him, the flowers, the glowworms which came out in the evening, and the slight accident by which he sprained his foot. In its detail it reflects the patient, industrious habits by which business and science were to thrive in the next century—for Pepys was a scientist and president of the Royal

Pepys's Diary.

Society. In its uniformity of tone, its lack of emphasis and dramatic interest, so different from Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, it illustrates again the sober modernity which the citizen's life was beginning to assume. In its worldliness, its reflection of perfectly unashamed delight in mere comfort, well-being, and success, it shows the bourgeois ideal of life. In its suggestions of moral laxity it perhaps testifies to the complacence with which even safe and honest burghers saw the natural life free itself from Puritan scruples. And finally, the pleasure in his own life, which sustained the author in the mechanical toil of recording its phenomena, is to be connected with the interest in human life in general which constituted the force behind the development of realistic fiction in the following century.

The Restoration Drama

When the theatres were closed in 1642, the succession of great Jacobean dramatists had nearly come to an end, Shirley alone being alive. However, the drama retained its hold on the masses; even under Cromwell, the playwright Davenant obtained permission to give a play with a musical accompaniment, *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656). To this opera Dryden attributed the beginning of the dominant fashion of the time in tragedy, the heroic play, to which type many of Dryden's own dramas belong. To the most famous of them, *The Conquest of Granada*, he prefixed the essay, "Of Heroic Plays," in which he cites also the example of Ariosto, with his stories of love and valor, as contributing to his conception. The heroic play, though by no means an imitation of French tragedy, owed something to the example of Corneille, especially its heightening of characters to heroic proportions, and probably also its use of rhyme. Dryden defended the use of rhyme, in

The Heroic Play.

the dedication to one of his early plays, on the ground that "it bounds and circumscribes the fancy. For imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless, that like an high ranging spaniel it must have clogs tied to it lest it outrun the judgment." This philosophy, so typical of the time, did not prevent Dryden from pushing his characters into unnatural extravagance of passion; a fault which, as it appears in *The Indian Queen* (1664), *The Indian Emperor* (1665), and *The Conquest of Granada* (1670), was caricatured in *The Rehearsal* (1671), a famous mock heroic drama by the Duke of Buckingham and others.

In the last of his heroic plays, *Aurengzebe* (1675), Dryden confesses in the prologue that he "grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme." Accordingly his next play, *All for Love* (1678), a rehandling of the story of Antony and Cleopatra, he wrote in blank verse. This play is commonly regarded as his dramatic masterpiece. In addition to his tragedies, Dryden wrote a number of comedies in prose, and tragicomedies in a mixture of prose and verse, most of which are too broad for modern reading.

Dryden's Later Dramas.

A writer who on two occasions surpassed Dryden, Thomas Otway (1651–1685), was an unsuccessful actor who turned to writing plays. His *Don Carlos* (1675), written in rhymed couplets, won for him his first success. When Dryden abandoned rhyme, the world of playwrights changed with him; and Otway's second important play, *The Orphan* (1680), was in blank verse. The situation, turning upon the love of two brothers for Monimia, the orphan ward of their father, is one which Ford might have created. In working it out, Otway is relentless; he has evolved from it one of the cruelest of English tragedies. In his power of deepening the horror by a lighter, simpler touch, pitiful as a strain of music, he reminds us again of the later

Thomas Otway.

Elizabethans, especially of Webster. Even more successful than *The Orphan* was *Venice Preserved* (1682), in which, as in *The Orphan*, Otway caught something of the greatness of handling characteristic of an earlier time. His plays have the genuine passion which Dryden lacked, and they are not marred by the distortions of human life and character that abound both in Dryden and in the Jacobean dramatists.

Except for the plays mentioned, the tragedy of the Restoration has, in the main, only a literary interest, as a survival of the great dramatic period, and as an illustration of foreign influences. The Restoration comedy, however, is a genuine reflection of the temper, if not of the actual life, of the upper classes of the nation; and as such it has a sociological as well as a literary interest. As practised by Shakespeare, English comedy had been romantic in spirit. However seriously it had been concerned with the essentials of human nature, it had had comparatively little to do with the circumstances of actual human life. In Ben Jonson and Middleton, and especially in the latest of the Jacobeans, Shirley, we find more realistic treatment of the setting, the social surroundings, of the play. Following their lead, and stimulated by the example of Molière, the comedians of the Restoration devoted themselves specifically to picturing the external details of life, the fashions of the time, its manners, its speech, its interests. For scene they turned to the most interesting places they knew, the drawing-rooms, the coffee-houses, the streets and gardens of London. Their characters were chiefly people of fashion, and their plots, for the most part, were love intrigues, often borrowed from the French, both developed with clever dialogue. In tendency these plays are, almost without exception, immoral. They represent the reaction of the playgoing public against Puritanism. They are antisocial, in that they represent social institu-

Restoration Comedy.

tions, particularly marriage, in an obnoxious or ridiculous light; but they are not romantic or revolutionary. There is in them never an honest protest against institutions, never a genuine note of revolt. Conventions are accepted to be played with and attacked, merely by way of giving opportunity for clever, corrupt talk, or point to an intrigue.

Wycherley and Congreve.

The first of this school of comedians was Sir George Etherege (1635–1691), an Englishman who had been educated at Paris, and who there had seen the comedies of Molière. Etherege was followed by William Wycherley (1640–1715), whose best plays are *The Country Wife* (1673) and *The Plain Dealer* (1674). Both are borrowed in outline from Molière, but their moral atmosphere is that of the corrupt court of Charles II, where Wycherley was a favorite. William Congreve (1670–1729) was a far more brilliant playwright. His masterpieces, *Love for Love* (1695) and *The Way of the World* (1700), carry the interest of dialogue, of the verbal fence between character and character, to its extreme development.

The Protest of Jeremy Collier.

It has been pointed out that one effect of the age that succeeded the Restoration was to organize society, to restrain the license of the individual. The antisocial influence of the plays of the time was clearly perceived, and protest was not lacking. It took time for the protest to gather force, in face of the spirit of wild reaction against all that savored of Puritanism; but in 1698 a clergyman, Jeremy Collier, published his *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*, and Dryden, who was one of the dramatists particularly attacked, admitted the justice of the rebuke. Its immediate effect was not sufficient to do away with the coarseness of Restoration comedy, which appears to the full in Sir John Vanbrugh (1666–1726); but an improvement is

noticeable in the works of George Farquhar (1678–1707), the last of the school; and in Steele's plays the drama is in full alliance with the forces which were making for morality and decent living.

CHAPTER X

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: THE REIGN OF CLASSICISM

THE history of the early part of the eighteenth century shows a continuation of the social and literary forces which had begun with the Restoration. It was a period in which imagination slept, and in which the sense of the temporal realities of life was strong. It was a period of criticism rather than of creation, a period in which regularity and perfection of literary form were of more importance than originality of thought. It was an age of interest in the development of society and of institutions, rather than in the assertion of the individual. In this particular, indeed, it went beyond the Restoration period. We have seen that the literature, especially the drama, of this latter epoch was marked by something of the license of the Renaissance. The protest of Jeremy Collier against the stage, in 1698, was typical of the attitude of the new century, which realized and feared the antisocial effect of vice. These tendencies toward realism of subject-matter, toward technical perfection of form, and toward social usefulness of purpose, are notably illustrated by the three chief figures of the literature of the age of Queen Anne—Swift, Addison, and Pope.

General Characteristics.

The first of them and the greatest, Jonathan Swift, was born in Ireland of English parents, in 1667. He was a posthumous son, and he grew up to share his mother's poverty. He was sent to the University of Dublin, where, as he says, he was "stopped of his degree for dulness and unsufficiency; and at last hardly admitted in a manner little to his credit."

Jonathan Swift.

In 1689 he left Ireland to take a position as under-secretary to a distant relative, Sir William Temple, with whom he remained intermittently for some years, reading aloud to his patron, writing at dictation, keeping accounts, and cursing his fate. While in this service he wrote *The Battle of the Books*, a contribution to the controversy which Temple was carrying on with Bentley, the great scholar, as to the comparative merit of ancient and modern writers. About this time, also, he wrote a satire on the divisions of Christianity, called *A Tale of a Tub*. Neither work was published until 1704. With Temple's help he entered the church; and after his patron's death he returned to Ireland as chaplain to Lord Berkeley, by whom he was given the living of Laracor.

His Political Career.

Then began the great period of Swift's life, the time of his political power. During the reign of William III party strife was bitter between the Whigs, who supported the King in his foreign policy of resistance to Louis XIV of France, and the Tories, who opposed him; and this struggle was continued in the reign of Queen Anne. Almost all the prominent literary men of the time were engaged on one side or the other. Swift, who was frequently in London, promoting his candidacy for offices in the church as they fell vacant, at first wrote on the Whig side; but in 1710 he joined the Tories, who were just coming into power. The Tory ministry, of which Lord Bolingbroke was a member, was resolved to stop the war with France; and in defense of this policy Swift put out one of his strongest political writings, *The Conduct of the Allies*. His life during these years is reflected in his *Journal to Stella*, a daily account of his doings which he wrote for his friend, Esther Johnson. Here we find Swift playing the part in which he most delighted, that of a man of affairs, active, successful, and powerful. He records with gusto his hours spent with the rulers of the country; their politeness and his

own half-contemptuous familiarity; his ability to serve his friends and to punish his enemies. In 1713, as the price of his support of the Tory government, he was named Dean of Saint Patrick's in Dublin, a promotion little to his taste. The next year the Tories went out of power, discredited by Bolingbroke's intrigues with the Pretender; and Swift returned to Ireland.

His Later Life.

Here his unconquerable activity found vent in defending the Irish, or rather the Englishmen who lived in Ireland, from the careless tyranny of the government. In this endeavor he published *The Drapier's Letters*, most of them in 1724, as a protest against debasing the Irish coinage. In 1726 he took the manuscript of his most famous work, *Gulliver's Travels*, to London for publication, and the next year he returned thither to taste the pleasure of a great literary success. This, as all else in his life, seemed to turn only to disappointment. In 1728 Miss Johnson, the "Stella" of the *Journal*, died. Whether or not it is true, as some think, that Swift was secretly married to her, she was his closest friend, and her death left him desolate. As the years passed his hatred for the world grew more intense, and his satire more bitter. A disease from which he had suffered at intervals gained rapidly upon him, resulting in deafness and giddiness; and he suffered also from attacks of epilepsy and insanity. After years of gloom and agony, death came slowly upon him. He died in 1745.

Swift's Practical Nature.

It is evident from this narrative that, to a great extent, Swift's writings were occasional, and grew out of the circumstances of his life. He was not a professional writer; with one or two exceptions, his works were published anonymously. He was a man of affairs, who became a man of letters because literature was a means by which affairs could be directed. His writings must be regarded, then, as one

expression among others of energy turned to practical ends; as one evidence among others of his preternatural activity. For Swift lived hard. "There is no such thing," he wrote to a friend, "as a fine old gentleman; if the man had a mind or body worth a farthing they would have worn him out long ago."

His Activity.

This need of exercise shows itself not only in his serious preoccupation with the life of his time, but also in his gigantic sense of play. The anecdotes related of him by his earlier biographers are legion, most of them turning upon the translation of some whim into practical form, usually as a grotesque joke. The tale of his dispersing a crowd gathered to witness an eclipse, by sending a message that, according to the Dean's orders, the eclipse would be put off for a day; of his impersonating a poor usher at a reception, to draw the contempt of a rich fool; and of his disguising himself as a fiddler at a beggar's wedding, to discover the arts by which impostors live—all these bear testimony to that restlessness which could not be satisfied by work alone. With this lighter side of Swift's nature are to be connected the works by which he is chiefly known—his satires *A Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*.

The Partridge Predictions.

Once, indeed, this love of a practical joke was directly responsible for some of Swift's most characteristic writing. A certain Partridge was in the habit of issuing an almanac, with predictions of events to fall out in the next year. This impostor Swift exposed in a set of "Predictions for the year 1708," one of which was the death of Partridge himself, who, according to the prophecy, should "infallibly die upon the 29th of March, about eleven at night, of a raging fever." This pamphlet was published over the name Isaac Bickerstaff. On the 30th of March Swift published a letter supposed to be written by a revenue officer to a certain nobleman, giving an account of Par-

tridge's last days and death. He also wrote "An Elegy of Mr. Partridge." Of course Partridge hastened in triumph to assure the world that he was not dead; but Swift promptly came back with "A Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff," in which, after rebuking Partridge for his impudence, he proved by various logical demonstrations that Partridge certainly died "within half an hour of the time foretold."

This skit is broadly characteristic of the whole spirit and method of Swift's work, in that it exposes a sham or an evil by setting up a more monstrous imposition against it, and defends the latter with ironical seriousness; the whole being permeated so thoroughly by malicious and contemptuous fooling that one hesitates to say whether it may or may not have been written with a certain amount of reforming zeal. In Swift's works generally there is this double aspect of earnestness and play. In "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from being a Burden," the terrible suffering in Ireland is revealed in the mocking suggestion that the poor should devote themselves to rearing children to be killed and eaten. *A Tale of a Tub*, with its bitter reflections upon the spiritual history of man since the advent of Christianity, is on its face the story of three stupid brothers quarrelling over the inheritance of their father. *Gulliver's Travels* is, in form, a sort of *Robinson Crusoe*, yet it is full of satiric intention.

Swift's Method.

Gulliver is shipwrecked first at Lilliput, where the inhabitants are six inches tall—except their emperor, "taller by almost the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders." Here the satire obviously consists in showing human motives at work on a small scale, and in suggesting, by the likeness of the Lilliputians to ourselves, the littleness of human

"Gulliver's Travels."

affairs. The arts by which the officers of the government keep their places, such as cutting capers on a tight rope for the entertainment of the emperor, remind us of the quality of statesmanship both in Swift's day and our own; the dispute over the question at which end an egg should properly be broken, which plunged Lilliput into civil war, is a comment on the seriousness of party divisions in the greater world. Gulliver's next voyage, to Brobdingnag, brings him to a people as large in comparison with man as the Lilliputians are small. Once more his adventures are a tale of wonder, behind which lurks Swift's contempt for humanity. Gulliver tells the giant beings by whom he is surrounded, and in comparison with whom he is a mere manikin, of the world from which he has come. Among other things, he tells of the invention of gunpowder, and the use of instruments of warfare. "The king was struck with horror at the description I had given of those terrible engines. He was amazed how so impotent and grovelling an insect as I (these were his expressions) could entertain such inhuman ideas." Finally, after a third voyage to Laputa and other curious places, Gulliver makes his fourth journey, to the land of the Houyhnhnms, where horses are the self-conscious rulers and masters, and where the human animal is in a state of servitude and degradation. Here again Gulliver relates to his incredulous hosts the follies and cruelties of men. But the fiercest satire is in the picture of the Yahoo, the human beast, in which the worst of man is once for all told.

Swift's Attitude Toward His Time.

This double point of view, this wavering between jest and earnest, is not only superficially characteristic of Swift's writing; it seems also to have been deeply rooted in his mental constitution. It is almost as if he could never be quite sure that the world was worth his zeal; as if he never wished to compromise himself as a reformer, or to

cut himself off from the possibility of falling back upon jest. This attitude on his part must be understood in order to apprehend his relation to the times in which he lived. As has been said, one task of the eighteenth century was to revise and enforce standards of taste and living. Toward this task Swift took two opposite positions. In his contempt for man he could, when convenient, defend social and intellectual conventions, in the belief that shams and delusions were restraints necessary to the orderly government of the world; that they were, so to speak, wiles by which the intelligent Houyhnhnms controlled the unspeakable Yahoos about them. But then it is quite open to him to turn about and cry: "What business has the world of Yahoos with standards at all? Man being what he is, decency and comeliness are but conventions." And he proceeds to attack them. He takes a malicious joy in shocking persons whose characters are founded upon mere respectability. To this instinct for revolt must be ascribed the obscenity with which, especially in his poems, Swift insulted the growing modesty and propriety of his countrymen.

His Distinction.

It is the thoroughness of Swift's pessimism, his complete distrust of the world, that gives to him his singularity and peculiar impressiveness among English writers. It would be fruitless to deny that in this pessimism there is something stimulating, something awakening; perhaps because it is a change from the conventional mode in which we are taught to look at the world. The real distinction in his view, his disregard of the accepted, the trite, the commonplace, all serve to startle us into eager attention. His keenness calls for answering alertness in ourselves; his suggestiveness is tonic; even his coarseness contains something of vigorous criticism that will not let us rest in conventional opinions, but bids us prove all things and call everything by its true name.

The practical spirit which Swift brought to his writing, his intention to make it serve a turn and accomplish a purpose, is reflected in his style. First among his merits as a writer is his clearness. Further, his contempt for all kinds of sham led him to despise literary affectation; directness and simplicity are the virtues by which he sets most store. Indeed, if anything, his style is too severe, too sternly practical, too reserved, too dry. It represents men and things in too hard a light, with too sharp an outline, without the softening and color which come from a sympathetic temperament. Yet with all this practical downrightness, Swift's style is full of finesse. A more subtle instrument, capable of more delicate persiflage, of more elaborate innuendo, it would be difficult to find. So little obvious are its devices, so persistent is its plainness, that we cease to suspect it; but the writer neither slumbers nor sleeps. Always conscious of an end beyond the admitted one, always advancing on it stroke by stroke, he surprises us out of the security into which we have been lulled, and startles us into keenness and nervousness by the paradox which lurked all the while behind the sober, grave exterior. Of obvious decoration, such as balance, rhythm, antithesis—the half-poetic qualities of earlier prose—Swift has little. Indeed, it is clear that the nakedness and simplicity of his style were necessary to the rapidity and address of his attack. In the heavy rhetorical panoply of Euphues or Jeremy Taylor he would have been as helpless as David in the armor of Saul. Absolute, unmitigated prose he wrote—the quintessence of prose.

His Style.

The bulk of Swift's political writing appeared in pamphlets, but he used also the periodical form; he conducted a paper in the Tory interest, called *The Examiner*, to which Addison, the chief literary man among the Whigs, replied in the *Whig Examiner*. The idea of the periodical appearance

Periodical Literature.

of a party organ was suggested by the newspapers, of which the first had appeared in 1622, Butter's *Weekly Newes from Italy and Germanie*. These early newspapers were at first little more than meagre chronicles of events. Gradually they came to include discussion of lighter matters, chiefly in the form of answers to questions. *Defoe's Review* (see page 275) contained a separate department called "Advice from the Scandalous Club, being a weekly history of Nonsense, Impertinence, Vice, and Debauchery." That province of journalism which lies between news and politics was not adequately possessed, however, until, in 1709, there appeared a periodical of which the object was to "observe upon the pleasurable as well as the busy part of mankind." This was *The Tatler*, founded by Richard Steele (1672–1729), who was soon joined in the enterprise by his friend Joseph Addison (1672–1719).

The Tatler appeared three times a week. Each number consisted of several letters dated from the different coffee-houses of London; those from the Saint James being devoted to foreign and domestic affairs, those from Will's to poetry and the drama, those from White's to "gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment." There were also papers dated "From my own apartment," which dealt with miscellaneous topics, personal or social. It was in these last that the authors carried out most fully the object which they set before themselves, "to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behavior." Although *The Tatler* appealed to the public without distinction of party, it was colored by Steele's Whig views. Accordingly, when the authors wished to avoid politics altogether they abandoned *The Tatler*, replacing it by *The Spectator* (1711), in which Addison took the chief part.

"The Tatler."

Although Addison and Steele are thus remembered for their effort to lead literature away from politics, both were party men. Addison first attracted notice while at Oxford by a Latin poem on the Treaty of Ryswick; in recognition of this effort he received a pension of three hundred pounds a year, enabling him to travel abroad. After his return the Whigs needed a poet to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough's victory of Blenheim, and the commission fell to Addison. His poem "The Campaign" gained for its author various honors and preferments; and until his death in 1719 he was almost constantly in office. Indeed, Addison's career affords the best example of the high rewards which the service of party offered in the early eighteenth century to literary men. Even his tragedy, *Cato*, which was presented in 1713, owed its great popularity to a supposed parallel between the struggles of parties at Rome and the contemporary political situation in England; and as neither party could allow the other to take to itself the platitudes about liberty with which the play is strewn, Whigs and Tories alike attended the performances, vying with each other in the violence of their applause.

Joseph Addison.

No character in English letters is better known or more generally admired than Addison. This power of attracting admiration is largely due to a certain classic quality which showed itself in his literary ideals, in his pure, regular style, in the just appreciation of his criticism, and in his singularly correct sense of conduct. His taste was nearly faultless, and taste did for him what it should do for any one; it saved him from blunders and follies. In his life as in his writing, what he did was well done. Every stroke that went to the presentation of his character in bodily form seems to have been laid on with conscious care and conscious pride. The last touch of all, as he lay on his death-bed, and turning to his stepson bade him "See

Addison's Character.

in what peace a Christian can die," expresses the mood in which his whole life was lived.

This mood colored most of Addison's writing. The papers which he contributed to *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, and other periodicals are for the most part essays in the art of living. They illustrate the practical nature of his own culture, his easy, skilled mastery of life. To the world of the eighteenth century, with its crudeness, its coarseness, its grotesqueness, as revealed in the drawings of Hogarth, Addison came much as Matthew Arnold came to the later nineteenth century, with its materialism and its trust in machinery. Both were missionaries, Addison the more successful because the more tactful. His task too was simpler, to enforce ideals of civilization, and in particular to overcome the antisocial tendencies of both Puritan and Cavalier, preserving the zeal for conduct of the former without his gloom and intolerance, and the lightness and gayety of the latter without his license. Thus we find many of Addison's papers directed against the coarser vices of the time, against gambling, drinking, swearing, indecency of conversation, cruelty, practical joking, duelling. Others attack the triviality of life, special follies and foibles of dress, of manners, or of thought; others the lack of order and comfort in the life of the community. Addison cared also for the literary cultivation of his readers, as is shown by such papers as the famous series of criticisms on Milton. Finally, he made a novel contribution to literature in a series of sketches of character and contemporary types—of himself as the Spectator, of Sir Andrew Freeport the merchant, of Sir Roger de Coverley the country gentleman, of Will Honeycomb the man of fashion. These figures typified conveniently the interests of the public to which *The Spectator* appealed; but more than this they define themselves as persons, fitting members of the great company of characters who live in English fic-

His Mission.

tion from Chaucer to George Meredith. One of them at least, Sir Roger de Coverley, to whose presentation both Addison and Steele contributed, is drawn with genuine affection, as an embodiment of healthy, kindly, natural virtue, touched with just enough humor to make the picture convincing and wholly winning.

His Method.

In his treatment of these various subjects Addison displays the graces of style which are the expression of his character. He has perfect confidence in his position, and in his style sureness goes hand in hand with absolute lightness of touch. His sense of humor saves him from putting himself on the defensive by overemphasis. Even such a serious subject as the separation between men on political grounds, he treats by a playful comparison with the fashion of ladies in wearing plaster patches of different shapes on their faces. This easy tone comes from Addison's moderation and reasonableness, and from his genuine good nature. Satirist though he is, he is never misanthropic. The difference between his satire and Swift's appears in the contrast between his bantering analysis of a "Coquette's Heart" and Swift's savage "Letter to a Young Lady."

His Style.

Technically, Addison's style shows how rapidly English prose was approaching its perfection. For the more regular virtues, clearness, facility, grace, it has always been a model. Its best encomium was pronounced by Doctor Johnson when he wrote: "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

Addison and Steele.

Despite the close connection between Addison and Steele, in friendship, political interests, and literary work, the two men were very different. Addison's father was a clergyman. Addison himself intended to take orders, and throughout his life showed something of the remoteness and coldness of

clerical culture. "He looked," as a contemporary said with some scorn, "like a parson in a tie-wig." Steele, on the contrary, was for some years a soldier, and never lost the bearing of his profession. He was Captain Steele and wore a sword to the end of his days.

Steele's Character.

Steele's life was a miscellaneous one, filled with all sorts of ventures, literary, political, and commercial. He left Oxford without his degree, to enlist as a soldier. He forsook the army to become an active pamphleteer and journalist in the interest of the Whigs, by whom he was given various government positions. He was elected to Parliament, but was expelled from the House for writing a political pamphlet. He wrote several plays, and was for a time director of Drury Lane Theatre. Altogether his life was a thing of fragments. His character, too, showed certain flaws and lapses, faults of a generous, spontaneous nature; and to these his writings in a measure served to call attention. While a soldier he wrote *The Christian Hero*, a manual of personal and domestic virtues; his plays were a bit superfluously moral; in *The Tatler* he appeared as a preacher. This discrepancy between his personal life and the tenor of much of his writing laid Steele open to gibe and sneer; but there is an honest human quality about his inconsistencies that gives him, after all, a charm which his greater contemporaries lack. Whether as Christian or as man of the world, Steele was always himself, and if he did not erect a palatial character like Addison's, he built a genial dwelling-place where all the world was welcome.

His Style.

The inconsistency in Steele's life is reflected in his style. He has two manners: one eminent, gracious, dignified, the style which corresponds to his moods of elevation and didacticism; the other careless, flexible, free, like his ordinary life. This second manner is best seen in his letters to his wife, which, in

their delightful frankness and their abandonment to the feeling of the moment, show him in his most attractive aspect. They prove that the lightness and ease which mark *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, qualities which in Addison were the fruit of cultivation, were entirely native to Steele.

Addison and Steele were moralists, and their doctrine is in a high degree characteristic of their time. It deals with the material and superficial aspects of living; it represents the effort of literature to support the conventions in accordance with which life was ordering itself. This attitude, however wholesome and necessary, involved a tendency to set an excessive value on outward behavior as distinct from character, a tendency which becomes more marked in a writer of somewhat later date, Lord Chesterfield (1694–1773). The principles of good form, for which Chesterfield's name is a byword, he expounds fully in his *Letters to His Son*, which set forth a system of conduct based frankly upon scepticism as to the reality of morals. Historically Chesterfield represents the extreme swing of the pendulum that was set in motion by Steele and Addison. With him the decorum and urbanity inculcated by *The Spectator* have become the major ends of life, the chief business of a gentleman. Chesterfield typifies one phase of the rather shallow positivism of the century, its refusal to go behind what appealed immediately to the senses, to believe in what it could not see. Politeness can be seen, felt, valued; hence it is real. Goodness of heart, virtue, may exist or not; we cannot be sure; they are so easy to simulate, so hard to test, that the wise man prefers to put no trust in them, and confines his interest to deportment. Such is Chesterfield's view.

Lord Chesterfield.

There is no sharp dividing line between the prose writers and the poets of the early eighteenth century. The practical spirit of the age, which limited the realm

of art to the interests of actual life, made the material of prose and poetry much the same; and owing to the character of couplet verse, the typical virtues of poetry were not very different from those of prose. Of the writers already discussed, Swift and Addison were poets as well as prose men. The greatest poet of the period, however, the direct continuator of the tradition of Dryden, and the most brilliant man of letters of the early part of the century, was Alexander Pope.

Prose and Poetry.

Pope was born in 1688 of Catholic parents. By reason of the sweeping laws against the entrance of Catholics into public service, he was shut out from the ordinary career of Englishmen in Parliament, the church, or the army. In consequence he was among his contemporaries almost the sole example of an author who was entirely a man of letters; the events of his life are altogether literary events. He began his career early. His *Pastorals*, written when he was seventeen, were published in 1709. The *Essay on Criticism* two years later attracted Addison's notice; and Pope's other early poems, "Windsor Forest," "Eloisa to Abelard," and above all *The Rape of the Lock*, of which the first draft appeared in 1712, added to his reputation. About 1713 he undertook the greatest venture of his life, the translation of Homer, which he did not complete until 1725. One important effect of the translation, on Pope's own career and on the literature of the time, is to be noted. From the publishers and from his sales to subscribers Pope obtained more than five thousand pounds for the *Iliad*, and two-thirds of this sum for the *Odyssey* (on which most of the work was done by others)—much the greatest pecuniary reward which up to that time had been received by any English author. It made Pope independent of patronage and politics, and it marks the opening of a new era in the social status of authors, one in which they looked to the public alone for support.

Alexander Pope.

The profits of his translation enabled Pope to buy a small estate at Twickenham, on the Thames near London. This he fitted up in the artificial style which the age affected in other things besides literature. He subdued nature to taste by landscape-gardening; scattered statuary and temples about in artistic contrast to the woods and lawns; and as his crowning achievement he built his famous grotto, ornamented with mirrors. At Twickenham Pope lived the remainder of his life, secluded from the cares and struggles of the world, but very constantly occupied with his own relations to it. Here he entertained his friends, Swift, Arbuthnot, Gay, and others, with whom he formed a literary partnership known as the Scriblerus Club. It was in connection with this partnership that he published, in 1728, a great onslaught on their literary foes, entitled *The Dunciad*. At Twickenham also Pope saw much of Bolingbroke, and under his influence wrote the *Essay on Man*, published in 1732 and 1734. The remainder of his work consists of the *Moral Epistles* (satires in imitation of Horace), the "Epistle to Doctor Arbuthnot," which is Pope's chief defense of himself, and the "Epilogue to the Satires." These were published before 1737, after which date Pope wrote little. He died in 1744.

His Later Life.

Pope's claim to the first place among the poets of his time cannot be gainsaid, but his true place among the poets of all time is a matter of dispute. At the outset it must be recognized that certain sources of power were denied him, partly in consequence of the nature of the period in which he lived, partly by reason of the deficiencies of his own temperament. The age was one in which sympathy with nature and with humanity was limited, and in this matter Pope shared the blindness of his age. Moreover, Pope was from birth sickly and feeble; his bodily ailments checked

Pope's Limitations.

the growth of his character. Accordingly, we miss in his poetry greatness of feeling for the natural world and for the world of man, as well as greatness of human personality. That such a man should become a poet at all is as wonderful as that a deaf man should be a composer, or a blind man a sculptor. That he should be the typical poet of his age shows how limited was the conception which then prevailed of the nature and function of poetry.

His Poetic Qualities.

But though certain qualities which we expect to find in poetry are necessarily absent in Pope, these were replaced, at least for his contemporaries, by others. First of all, he owed his success to his marvellous skill in handling the heroic couplet. He declares that as a child he "lisped in numbers, for the numbers came." But he was not satisfied with precocious amateurism. One of his earliest friends and critics, William Walsh, pointed out to him that "though we had had several great poets, we never had any one great poet that was correct." Correctness, accordingly, Pope made his aim from the first. Correctness requires patience, and genius for taking pains Pope had in abundance. Nor did he sacrifice to mere exactness of metre and rhyme the other virtues of couplet verse, compression, epigrammatic force, and brilliancy of diction. Still, it is not to be wondered at that, in the long process of polishing and revising to suit a standard of extreme nicety, he lost something of the spontaneity of his first attempts.

The "Essay on Criticism."

The importance of technical qualities in the eyes of Pope's public is attested by the success of the *Essay on Criticism*, in which he set forth the artistic principles of the time with special reference to poetry. In this discussion he expresses the chief canon of the age in the direction to follow nature, but nature methodized by rules, for "to copy nature is to copy them." The substance of the

poem is made up of commonplaces, for Pope and his readers believed that there was nothing new under the sun; but these commonplaces are given the most apt, the most chiselled form, a form in which they are fitted to survive as part of the common wisdom of the race.

Pope's comprehension of the artistic demands of his time, and his rhetorical skill, fitted him admirably for the work which took up most of the middle years of his life, that of translation. He translated from Ovid, Horace, and Statius; and he modernized Chaucer and Donne. But the most notable of all his attempts in this direction is his translation of Homer. The attitude of the eighteenth century toward the greatest of the classics is shown by a line in the *Essay on Criticism*, which declares that Homer and nature are the same, the highest object of study and imitation. Pope's own knowledge of Homer was second-hand and inaccurate; he was an indifferent Greek scholar, and was forced to depend on Latin and English translations. But the impossibility of his making a literally faithful translation left him the freer to turn the material of the Greek poems into the form in which it was most fitted to become a part of the culture of his own time. Not only does Homer, in Pope's hands, become an eighteenth-century poet, by virtue of his submission to the literary fashions of the day—the heroic couplet, and conventional poetic diction—but even the characters, the manners, the ethical ideals of primitive Greece are run over into eighteenth-century moulds. Just as to the cloudy mediæval imagination the heroes of Troy became knights, so to Pope's more enlightened understanding they are statesmen and party leaders, treating each other with parliamentary courtesy, and talking of virtue, patriotism, and fame as glibly and eloquently as Bolingbroke himself. In the loftier parts of Homer's poetry Pope's style has a certain appropriateness. It is in the

Pope's Homer.

level passages of narrative and description, where the simple material will not take the polish of brilliant diction and epigram, that Pope falls lamentably short of his original. Yet with all deductions, his Homer is an amazing performance, perhaps the most complete translation, or rather adaptation, in existence; a *tour de force* made possible by the definiteness and precision of eighteenth-century art, and by the confidence of the age in its own ideals.

"The Rape of the Lock."

The works of Pope thus far mentioned are chiefly remarkable for their literary qualities; they show him as the master of his form. But even more important is the group of poems in which, with no loss of artistic finish, he dealt directly with the life of his time. Of these *The Rape of the Lock* stands first. The poem was suggested by a trivial occurrence, the rude behavior of Lord Petre in cutting a lock from the head of Miss Fermor. Only the excessive interest of the age in social matters, combined with the sympathetic genius of a poet, could have made such gossip as this outlast the centuries. Pope wrote first a rapid account of the card-party at Hampton at which the theft took place. Later he expanded the poem by introducing the sylphs who guard the lady's bed, make her toilet, and attend her in public—admirable suggestions of the artifice which directed each act, however trivial, of a belle of Queen Anne's day. *The Rape of the Lock* is not only a satire on society, it is a witty parody of the heroic style in poetry. Even the verse form is treated humorously, especially through its tendency toward anticlimax, as in the lines

> Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
> Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.

In *The Rape of the Lock* the satire is general, and, on the whole, good-natured. Many of Pope's poems, how-

ever, are intensely personal, and grew out of the circumstances of his life. As has been said already, his character was not a great one. We listen in vain in his poetry for the deeper notes of individual human experience. But his lack of absorption in his inner life made him morbidly sensitive in his superficial contact with the world. His biography is largely a record of his personal relations with Wycherley, with Swift, with Addison, with Arbuthnot, and with Bolingbroke; and of his literary enmities with men too numerous and generally too obscure for mention. Two of his old friends, Wycherley and Swift, when both were mentally incapable, he tricked by putting out garbled versions of his correspondence with them. The story of his method of getting these letters before the public without appearing to be responsible for the publication is characteristic of his petty dishonesty, but still more of the attention which he paid to the surface of his life, and the care which he expended in preparing it for the public view.

Pope's Character.

Toward the close of Pope's life his personal interests formed more and more the chief motive of his poetry. The *Moral Epistles*, though written ostensibly on general themes like "The Use of Riches," are crowded with particular allusions; and the "Imitations of Horace" are likewise made up of personal contemporary sketches. The "Epistle to Arbuthnot" contains Pope's revenge for Addison's support of a rival translation of Homer, the venomous lines in which Addison is described as Atticus. His own literary ventures and his alliance with Swift, Gay, and others, brought him into collision with critics like John Dennis, with Theobald, a rival editor of Shakespeare, with Bentley, who as a Greek scholar spoke disrespectfully of Pope's Homer. These and countless other literary and personal grudges Pope paid off by the several publications of *The*

His Later Satire.

Dunciad, an elaborate satire in which, after the fashion of Dryden in *MacFlecknoe*, the dullards, pedants, and bad poets are presented in ridiculous surroundings and attitudes. It should be remembered, however, that Pope, like Sir Philip Sidney before him, represented an aristocratic tradition in literature, part of which was the defense of poetry against those who through lack of skill or for mercenary reasons would do it wrong.

The "Essay on Man."

One of Pope's last friendships, that with Bolingbroke, proved the inspiration of the best remembered of his poems, the *Essay on Man*. Bolingbroke was the representative of a philosophy, thoroughly characteristic of eighteenth-century thought, to which the name Deism has been given. Deism was an effort to substitute natural for revealed religion. Indeed, Pope's "Essay" is rationalistic in that it finds satisfactory grounds for belief in God by the exercise of reason, unaided by revelation. The poem is in reality an application of common sense to the problems of the universe and to the life of man; and where common sense refuses to carry us, "beyond the flaming ramparts of the world," there Pope limits his inquiry. The first epistle is concerned with man's place in nature; the second with individual ethics; the third with the origin of society and politics; the fourth with the question of man's happiness. In all four appear the rationalism of the century, its satisfaction with things as they are, its dislike of those speculative differences which lead to fanaticism, its trust in downright utility. In short, the *Essay on Man* is a marvellous collection of aphorisms, pointing neatly and exactly the peculiarities and prejudices of the age of which Pope was so eminently the voice.

John Gay.

Pope was by personal inclination connected chiefly with the writers who gathered about Swift, and in Swift's absence in Ireland he was the centre of the group. His satellite of chief magnitude was

John Gay (1685–1732). Gay, unlike his greater friends, was a thoroughly good-natured, likable man, whose bent was toward broad, genial humor rather than bitter satire. His earliest important poem, *The Shepherd's Week* (1714), was a burlesque treatment of the conventions of pastoral poetry. In *Trivia* (1714) he transferred his talent for humorous observation to the London streets, and this and the *Fables* (1727) show his happy faculty for easy comment and criticism of life. His fame in his own day rested perhaps chiefly upon *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), another burlesque, but he is remembered now for a lyrical gift, which produced the two famous songs, "'Twas when the seas were roaring" and "Black-eyed Susan."

CHAPTER XI

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: BEGINNINGS OF ROMANTICISM

I

The Romantic Movement.

The death of Pope in 1744 is conventionally regarded as marking the end of the period during which the classical ideal was dominant in literature. This ideal was now to give way gradually to what is called the Romantic Movement. Romanticism has already been referred to in connection with the Renaissance. It is essentially the emphasis upon the individual effort to escape from the world of conventions and social control. There are two great avenues of such escape—external nature and the imagination. The former appeared in contrast to the prevailing admiration of urban life; the latter led men's thoughts into the past, and to remote lands. Indeed, mediævalism became associated with the Romantic Movement somewhat as classicism with the Renaissance, because it provided writers with material and forms suitable to their mood. But romanticism looked toward the future also; in its reverence for the individual for himself, apart from his social position, it fostered sympathy for the oppressed, applauded resistance to institutions hostile to human rights, and looked forward to a new social system, a Utopia. It thus connected itself with the revolutionary tendency that manifested itself at the close of the century. It must not be thought that romanticism and classicism are mutually exclusive elements. Both impulses are present in every age. But while the classical movement was gaining

strength throughout the seventeenth century and became quite dominant after 1660, the romantic tendency began to gather force early in the eighteenth century and came to full triumph early in the nineteenth.

Early Romantic Tendencies.

Even before Pope's death there were signs of reaction against the pseudoclassicism which he so perfectly typified. His success with the heroic couplet moved younger poets to try other forms, and in increasing number they returned to the great poems of his predecessors, Milton and Spenser, in blank verse and the Spenserian stanza. Moreover, his comparative neglect of nature and human passion may have been a cause why men of originality should have entered these fields. At first this play of emotion manifested itself in a return to the great theme which had inspired so much of seventeenth-century poetry and prose—death. The number of poems of the character of Thomas Parnell's "Night Piece on Death," and Robert Blair's "The Grave" gave rise to the term "graveyard poetry" to designate the school. The earliest poets to exemplify romanticism broadly, however, made use of the two avenues above mentioned—nature and the past.

Thomson's "Seasons."

The first of this group of poets, James Thomson (1700–1748), was a Scotchman, who came up to London in 1725. The following year he published a section, "Winter," of a poem which he afterward continued under the titles "Summer," "Spring," and "Autumn," and which was published in 1730 as *The Seasons*. To a reader of to-day, accustomed to a far deeper and subtler appreciation of nature than Thomson was capable of, this poem seems a rather humdrum chronicling of the sights, experiences, and thoughts connected with the changes of the year; and the moral digressions, the compliments to patrons, the pseudoclassic personifications, and the frequently stilted rhetoric,

tend to obscure the real freshness and truth of Thomson's observation. But to the readers of his own day the novelty was great. For two generations the first-hand study of nature had been neglected. Literature had found its interests in urban life; or, if it ventured into the country at all, it was into the conventional, unreal country of the pastoral tradition. The Augustan age cared more for a formal garden in the Dutch or Italian style than for the sublimest natural landscape in the world; and when, by the necessity of their subject, Augustan authors had touched upon ordinary natural phenomena, they had striven to conceal the rudeness of their theme by vague and elegant circumlocution. Accordingly, Thomson's poem had an aspect of daring innovation. His views of English landscape, now panoramic and now detailed, his description of the first spring showers, of the summer thunder-storms, and of the terrors of the wintry night, showed an honest understanding and love of that to which the eye had long been blind. In the Hymn with which *The Seasons* concludes, a higher mood appears—a mood of religious ecstasy in the presence of nature, prophetic of Wordsworth, by whom, indeed, Thomson was highly valued:

Novelty of Thomson's Nature-Studies.

> Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to Him;
> Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart
> As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.

The Seasons is in blank verse. In *The Castle of Indolence*, published in 1748, Thomson adopted the Spenserian stanza. His allegiance to Spenser is more than formal. He succeeds in recapturing much of the master's rich, long-drawn music; and he steeps his allegory in the Spenserian atmosphere of mirage-like splendor. The embowered castle of the enchanter Indolence and his cap-

"The Castle of Indolence"; Its Romantic Color.

tives, the "land of drowsy-head," with its "listless climate," where the plaint of stock-doves mingles with the sighing of the hillside pines and with the murmur of the distant sea, are described with an art which made *The Castle of Indolence* a fruitful influence in romantic verse, even as late as Keats.

As Thomson exemplifies the Spenserian influence at work in the eighteenth century, Collins, Young, and Gray mark that of Milton. Young reverted to Milton's blank verse; Collins and Gray abound in echoes, and indeed in literal borrowings, from Milton's earlier lyrical work. To Milton's example in "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" is perhaps due the fact that both these poets, after they had freed themselves from the other machinery of pseudoclassic verse, persisted in the use of those lifeless personifications—"wan Despair," "brown Exercise," "Music, sphere-descended Maid"—in which the Augustan age delighted.

Influence of Spenser and Milton on the Romantic Revival.

William Collins (1721–1759) was a delicate, nervously irresolute spirit, who lived his life under the shadow of a constitutional despondency which deepened at last into insanity. He was an ardent disciple of Thomson's, and when he came up to London, he settled near Thomson's house in Kew Lane, where the elder poet was illustrating his romantic tendencies by writing verse in the moonlight, while listening to the nightingales in Richmond Gardens. In 1747 Collins published a slender volume of *Odes*, in which we can trace, more surely than in Thomson's work, the recovery of the greater qualities of poetry. The exquisite "Ode to Evening" shows a sympathy with nature, and an observation of her aspects, subtler and more suggestive than that displayed in *The Seasons*. The ode is unrhymed, and has a low, meditative twilight music. The famous "Ode on the Passions" is, on the contrary, very

Collins's Odes.

rich and elaborate in its metrical form, and it illustrates the influence upon Collins of Milton's lyrical art. The Passions here are shadowy personifications, and the effect of the whole poem is rather cold, but it shows clearly that the technical secrets of great lyrical poetry were beginning to be rediscovered.

"Ode on Popular Superstitions."

Another ode of Collins's, "On the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands" (1749), is one of the most interesting landmarks in the history of the romantic revival. The purpose of the poem is to recommend the native folk-lore of Scotland as poetic material. Collins lets his fancy play over the folk-myths of water-witch, pygmy, and will-o'-the-wisp, and over all the creatures of that fairy world so real to the mediæval mind. With kindling imagination he describes the wild Northern islands, whose inhabitants subsist on birds' eggs found among the sea-cliffs, where the bee is never heard to murmur; and he transports us to that mysterious region, where "beneath the showery West" the buried Kings stalk forth at midnight

> In pageant robes and wreathed in sheeny gold,
> And on their twilight tombs aerial council hold.

Here we see several of the leading traits of romanticism; interest in the mysterious and supernatural, in strange and remote conditions of human life, and in the Middle Ages as they appeared in vague chiaroscuro through a veil of dream.

Young's "Night Thoughts."

Collins's constitutional melancholy found little expression in his verse; it appears only as a kind of romantic sensibility penetrating his best lyrics, such as the "Dirge in Cymbeline" and "How Sleep the Brave," and casting here and there a faint flush of warmth over his odes. The funereal broodings and romantic despair, characteristic of the new movement, found their most striking expres-

sion in the *Night Thoughts* of Edward Young (1681–1765), published in 1742–1744, when the author was over sixty. The *Night Thoughts* are a series of reflections upon the brevity and tragic uncertainties of life, leading to a view of religion as man's consoler. The poet dwells, sometimes with tragic force and gloomy magnificence of phrase, oftener with a hollow and pompous rhetoric, upon the solitude of the tomb, and the grim circumstances of death. In the same year in which the *Night Thoughts* were begun, a far greater poet, Thomas Gray, began his famous "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," in which is revealed the same sombre view of man's life and destiny, though softened and broadened and humanized in a way to make the poem not only a perfect work of art, but a permanent expression of the mood it embodies.

Thomas Gray.

Thomas Gray (1716–1771) lived the life of a scholar and recluse at Cambridge, where in his later years he held a professorship of history, but delivered no lectures. The range of his intellectual interests, as shown by his letters, journals, and prose remains, was immense, including, besides ancient and modern literature, music, painting, architecture, and natural science. He was sensitive to all the finer influences of the time; and his development furnishes a kind of index to the spiritual forces at work, many years before they found a general outlet.

His First Period.

Gray's poetry, the bulk of which is very small, falls into three periods. His early odes, written about 1742, of which the best known are those "On Spring" and "On a Distant Prospect of Eton College," have much of the moralizing tone of Queen Anne poetry; though in their metrical form, in their sympathy with nature, and in their vague dejection, they show the romantic leaven at work. Gray's second period (1750–1757) includes the "Elegy in a Country Church-

yard,"[1] and his two most ambitious odes, "The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard." The Elegy, perhaps the most widely known and loved of English poems, is the finest flower of that "literature of melancholy" which Milton's *Il Penseroso*, acting upon the awakening romantic sense of the second quarter of the eighteenth century, brought forth in remarkable profusion. A large part of the charm of the Elegy comes from the poet's personal, sensitive approach to his subject. He lingers in the churchyard, noting the signs of approaching nightfall, until the atmosphere of twilight musing is established, after which his reflections upon life and death have a tone of sad and intimate sincerity. In its recognition of the dignity of simple lives lived close to the soil, and in its sympathy with their fate, the "Elegy" shows the breaking-up of the hard forms into which social feeling had stiffened, and looks forward to the humanitarian enthusiasm which marked the later phases of romantic poetry. "The Progress of Poesy" is a Pindaric ode, of the same type as Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," but (under Milton's influence) it is more richly rhymed, fuller of metrical artifice and surprise. It has the too conscious elegance of diction and employs the pseudoclassic mythology of Queen Anne poetry, but in the richness of its music it shows the romantic temper. "The Bard" is more distinctly romantic, both in subject and treatment. An ancient minstrel, the last of the Welsh singers, escaped from Edward's massacre, stops the King in a wild mountain-pass, and prophesies the terrors which are to gather over his descendants. This poem, with its imaginative rekindling of the passion of an ancient and perished people, shows, like Collins's ode "On the Superstitions of the Highlands," that reversion to the Mid-

His Second Period: "The Elegy."

"The Progress of Poesy."

"The Bard."

[1] Begun in 1742, but laid aside and not finished until 1750.

dle Ages for inspiration which soon became the leading feature of romantic art.

The third period of Gray's production shows how deep a hold mediævalism had already taken on him. He mastered old Norse material, probably in translation, and studied Welsh. The fruits of these researches were two powerful translations, as grim and picturesque as the most romantic heart could desire—"The Fatal Sisters" and "The Descent of Odin" (1761).

His Third Period: Icelandic and Welsh Studies.

A great stimulus was given to the curiosity concerning mediæval literature by the appearance in 1765 of a ballad collection entitled *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, gathered together by Bishop Percy, an antiquarian scholar with literary tastes. These ballads had a great effect in quickening the romantic impulse, by virtue of their naïve feeling and simple, passionate expression. About the same time as the *Reliques* appeared another book which, though not so genuine, had an even greater effect. This was an epic poem in irregular chanting prose, entitled *Fingal*, purporting to have been originally written in the ancient Gaelic tongue of the Scotch highlands by Ossian, the son of Fingal, a Celtic hero traditionally said to belong to the third century. The figures of the story are shadowy and large, the scenery wild, the imagery, at least to an uncritical reader, touched with a certain primitive sublimity and grandeur, and the whole pervaded by an atmosphere of melancholy which is emphasized in the sighing cadences of the style. Here is a specimen:

Ossian.

By the side of a rock on the hill, beneath the ancient trees, old Ossian sat on the moss; the last of the race of Fingal. Dull through the leafless trees he heard the voice of the north. . . . Fair with her locks of gold, her smooth neck, and her breasts of snow; fair as the spirits of the hills when at silent noon they glide along the heath—came Minvane the maid. Fingal, she softly

saith, loose me my brother Gaul. Loose me the hope of my race, the terror of all but Fingal. . . . Take thy brother, O Minvane, thou fairer than the snows of the north!

These "Ossianic" poems seem to have been in large part a clever literary fabrication, the work of a young Scotchman named Macpherson, who probably got his hint from genuine fragments of old Erse poetry. Their air of primeval sublimity was specious enough to make them pass current with an age which was weary of the classical traditions and eager for novel sensation, and their influence was enormous, not only in England but upon the Continent, in furthering the new taste for the mysterious past.

Chatterton's Mediæval Imitations.

Less successful in attracting attention, but more significant because springing from a deeper artistic instinct, was the series of literary forgeries put forth by the "marvellous boy," Thomas Chatterton (1752–1770). His childhood was passed in the shadow of the church of Saint Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; and the beautiful old building, with its rich historical associations, threw upon his sensitive mind a spell which was almost a mania. Some old parchments from the archives of the church fell into his hands; while deciphering them he conceived the daring scheme of composing poems and prose pieces in the mediæval style and diction, and of palming them off upon the good burghers of the town, as originals which he had unearthed in the muniment room of the church. Incredible as it seems, he began this work in his twelfth year. The first "historical" document which he submitted to his townsmen was a description of the opening of the old Bristol bridge. As this aroused some interest, he composed an elaborate series of poems and prose pieces grouped about the figure of William Canynge, mayor of Bristol under Henry VI, purporting to be the work of one Rowley, a fifteenth-century priest. Some of the poems, especially "Aella," "The Bristowe Tragedy," and the "Ballade of

Charitie," are of remarkable beauty and force; and when we remember that the author of them was scarcely more than a child, they become astonishing. After a proud struggle to make his living by his pen, Chatterton ended his morbid and amazingly precocious life by suicide in a London garret, at the age of eighteen. He was a signal example of the romantic temper destined soon to spread through the nation. It was fitting that, when the battle of the new poetry was fought and won, Keats should dedicate *Endymion* to his memory, and Shelley should place him in "Adonais" among the "inheritors of unfulfilled renown."

II

Persistence of the Classical Traditions.

It must be held in mind that the new literary movement which we have been tracing was the work of a small coterie of men, for the most part comparatively obscure. They were the revolutionists, who had declared their independence of the reigning mode. But the conservative writers, with Johnson and Goldsmith at their head, still had very great authority, and the classical traditions continued to be widely accepted. In the third quarter of the century Samuel Johnson succeeded to that primacy in English literature which had earlier belonged to Dryden and to Pope; but it is significant of the inroads which the romantic revival was making into the received traditions of eighteenth-century criticism that, though Johnson was of a more absolute temper than either of his predecessors, his sway was never so complete as theirs.

The Social Position of Writers.

Johnson's life is typical of the social conditions under which literature was practised, after it could no longer command high political reward, and was obliged to rely entirely upon the public. The reading public was of slow growth. The writers who depended upon it were compelled to

live in a squalid bohemia—not unlike that inhabited by the popular group of authors in the age of Elizabeth—and to put forth a mass of bad poetry, criticism, and journalism merely for bread. The name of the street where many of them lived, Grub Street, became a synonym for hack writing and poverty. The aristocratic traditions of the profession were supported by men of the highest reputation, like Pope, who could approach the public directly through the subscription list; but for the ordinary writer there was no resource except servitude to the literary broker or bookseller. Under these hard conditions Johnson and his friends slowly made their way to distinction; from that Grub Street which Pope and Swift had scornfully lampooned, came their successors in power and reputation.

Samuel Johnson.

Samuel Johnson was born in 1709, the son of a Lichfield bookseller. He was at Oxford for a time, but his father's failure obliged him to leave the university, and after vainly trying to win his bread as a teacher, he tramped to London. Here he lived in a state of wretchedness which is reflected in his *Life of Savage*, a poet who was his companion in Grub Street misery. Often the friends walked the streets from dusk to dawn for want of mere shelter. One resource was, indeed, open to them. Following the success of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, had come the periodical magazine of miscellaneous literature, of which the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731) and the *London Magazine* were the first. For some years Johnson wrote for the *Gentleman's Magazine* reports of the debates in Parliament. His first poem, "London" (1738), gave him some reputation, which was increased by "The Vanity of Human Wishes" (1749), and by his drama *Irene* (1749), a stiff classical tragedy, which was staged by the good nature of his friend and former pupil, David Garrick. He wrote also essays after *The Spectator* model, called *The Rambler*

(1750–1752). But his pre-eminent position came to him after the publication of his *Dictionary of the English Language*, in 1755. When he had announced this work seven years before, Johnson had sought the support and patronage of Lord Chesterfield, but the latter had been contemptuously cold toward the project. When the work was about to appear, however, the nobleman let it be known that he would accept and reward the dedication of the work to himself; but it was Johnson's turn, and in his famous letter to Chesterfield he wrote for English literature its final declaration of independence from the institution of patronage.

His Later Life.

The Dictionary made Johnson's fame and state secure. In 1764 he formed with Burke, Goldsmith, Gibbon, and others the famous Literary Club, as chief member of which he held the unquestioned headship of contemporary letters in England. Still, Johnson was poor; and to the end of his life he was forced to labor to support himself and the various persons who fell dependent upon him. The oriental apologue, *Rasselas*, appeared in 1759. He wrote other series of essays, *The Adventurer* and *The Idler*. He edited Shakespeare. He undertook the preparation of a series of lives of the English poets, which appeared between 1779 and 1781. He died in 1784.

Johnson's Classicism.

Both in his original writing and in his criticism upon the writings of others, Johnson emphasizes the classical dependence upon accepted models and attained results, as opposed to romantic experiment and aspiration. In his poetry he followed Pope's use of the heroic couplet. Like Pope, also, he modelled his poems on the works of Latin writers; his "London," for example, being a general attack upon the evils of society, in close imitation of Juvenal. His sympathy with classical ideals led him to observe the unities in his play *Irene*. In his prose he continued the

work of Dryden and Addison. His two most important prose works, his *Introduction to Shakespeare* and his *Lives of the Poets*, illustrate the point of view in matters of art which Dryden had established; and his essays are modelled upon the form set by *The Tatler*, though Johnson's essays are longer, heavier, and duller than Addison's. His moral tone, too, is more serious; for he looked at morality from the point of view of character, rather than from that of civilization. His essays on the "Necessity of Punctuality," on "Idleness," on "The Luxury of a Vain Imagination," are serious, though somewhat commonplace studies in the conduct of life. Indeed, the seriousness of Johnson's moral tone is everywhere pronounced; and in this respect, too, he is a genuine representative of the classic era, in its worthier aspects. His "Vanity of Human Wishes" is written in a strain of moral elevation. He accepted without question the classical fiction that works of art should somehow do good to people; even his *Lives of the Poets* he hopes are "written in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety."

His Reaction Against Classical Tradition.

But although, in these particulars, Johnson illustrates the formally accepted point of view of the classical age, there are many signs in him of an individual reaction against it. It is true, he was a classicist in his insistence upon the universal in taste, as opposed to the individual. But at the same time his sensible, reality-loving habit of mind led him to hit a sham when he saw it, even such a venerable and reverenced sham as the unities of dramatic action. In spite of his own conformity to classical requirement in *Irene*, he boldly points out, in his criticism of Shakespeare, that the acceptance of any theatrical production as real, involves such concessions from the imagination of the audience that it is not in common sense to refuse license in minor matters. His attitude on this and other points serves to illustrate the reason of the

eighteenth century at war with the principles of art which had been long assumed to be the highest expression of that reason. His position in the world of letters strikingly illustrates the approaching end of the era which had begun with the Restoration. His real sense of the values of things, and his freedom from cant, tended to shake his faith in pseudoclassical formulæ; and his personal force, his independence of character, his very prejudices, made broadly in the direction of individualism as against authority in criticism and thus prepared the way for the romantic reaction.

His Style.

The Rambler essays show, perhaps more saliently than any other of Johnson's writings, those peculiarities which have made his style a byword for heaviness. The diction involves a large proportion of Latin words, due, as has been humorously suggested, to the fact that Johnson was then at work on his lexicon, and used his *Rambler* as a track where he could exercise the words that had grown stiff from long disuse. Moreover, Johnson doubles epithets, adds illustrations, develops, expands, modifies, balances, repeats, and exhausts the idea before he will have done with it. His sentences are thus complicated and weighty, full of inversions, depending much on rhetorical artifices such as antithesis and climax. But this elaborate manner is not always out of place. It occasionally gives to Johnson's writing a sombre and splendid eloquence, as in the opening passage of *Rasselas*. Moreover, he could be simple and colloquial when he chose; and his later works, possibly because they were written more hurriedly, are much more terse and rapid. In general, Johnson's influence on English style was a good one. While he confirmed the tradition of order, correctness, and lucidity, which had begun with Dryden, he introduced a greater variety of effect, a more complex sentence structure, and a more copious diction. He showed how, even within the rules of com-

position defined in practice by Dryden and Addison, the richness and variety of Elizabethan prose might be attempted.

Johnson had in him a force of character far greater than he succeeded in bringing to bear on any of his literary undertakings. This force of character strongly impressed his contemporaries, and has been transmitted to later times by the extraordinary zeal and ability of the greatest of all biographers, James Boswell, whose *Life of Johnson* (1791) is one of the classics of the century. It begins with the year 1763, when its author first met Johnson. From that meeting Boswell followed the great man's doings and sayings with unwearied attention. In his effort to draw Johnson out and to make him expressive, he was deterred by no rebuffs, and he was not ashamed to offer himself as the butt of his master's wit. For twenty years he worked with his eye constantly upon his subject, and was then prepared, with the same cheerful sacrifice of his own dignity, to write the biography which still keeps Johnson in the place which he won, that of the most salient figure of his epoch. Of no man in the past is our perception so extraordinarily keen and first-hand. His bulky, awkward appearance, his brusque, overbearing manner, his portentous voice, his uncouth gestures and attitudes, his habits of whistling or "clucking like a hen" in the intervals of speaking, and of "blowing out his breath like a whale" when he had finished—all these have come down to us, together with the record of a great mass of his conversation. It is in this last that Johnson's power and Boswell's skill are most strikingly manifested. Johnson wrote much, but nearly always under the spur of necessity; he talked spontaneously. His reputation, indeed, rests largely upon such sayings as "Being in a ship is like being in gaol with the chance of drowning." or "A woman's preaching is like a dog's

Boswell's "Life of Johnson."

walking on his hind legs. It is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all." In such scraps of homely comment the practical sense of the age expressed itself as vividly and rememberably as in Pope's couplets.

To Boswell's *Life*, then, Johnson owes his latter-day reputation as an eccentric, and as a sayer of good things.

Johnson's Character.

But there is another Johnson whom Boswell knew without comprehending—the stricken, hopeless, much-enduring, brave, pious soul, who exemplifies so much of what is wholly admirable in human nature. For Johnson suffered grievously in life; and as he grew older his philosophy came to be a serious and considered pessimism. In *Rasselas* he deals honestly with the question of human happiness; and he finds that life is almost barren of joy, that escape from pain is the highest felicity. He made no attempt to blink the facts of existence; he had no imaginative coloring to give them; and yet he faced life always with energy and courage. In spite of everything, in spite even of weakness in his own character, he believed in himself. In his strenuousness, his morality, his refusal to yield ground anywhere to the evils without or the foes within, in his resolve to draw inspiration from his own shortcomings, in all this Johnson is a great man, and for this he deserves his fame.

Johnson's so-called dictatorship of English letters was largely the result of his conversational supremacy in the Literary Club, which included nearly all the famous writers of the time. Next to Johnson himself its most notable figure was Oliver Goldsmith. Goldsmith was born in 1728 in Ireland, where his father had a small living. He was a dull boy at school, and had an undistinguished career at the University of Dublin. He then went to Edinburgh to study medicine, and afterward to Leyden; whence he begged his way over a large part of Europe, returning to London in

Oliver Goldsmith.

1756. After an unsuccessful attempt as a schoolmaster, he took to literature as it was practised in Grub Street, and became a hack writer for various magazines. His papers called *The Citizen of the World* (1760–1761), which he wrote for the *Public Ledger*, consisted of observations upon English life written from the point of view of a Chinaman. In 1764 Johnson found him one day in his lodgings, the prisoner of his unpaid landlady, with the manuscript of *The Vicar of Wakefield* by him. Johnson sold the book, which appeared some fifteen months later, after Goldsmith had published his first successful poem, *The Traveller*. His second venture into poetry, *The Deserted Village*, appeared in 1770. Meanwhile Goldsmith had turned to the stage, producing *The Good-Natured Man* in 1768, and *She Stoops to Conquer* in 1773, the year before his death.

Goldsmith's Character.

Goldsmith is almost as well known to us as Johnson, and largely through the same agency, the industry of Boswell. He is portrayed in the *Life of Johnson* as the second luminary of the club, the only member who dared persistently to provoke the wrath of the dictator. Again and again Boswell shows us Johnson and Goldsmith, the heavily armed soldier and the deft slinger. Occasionally Johnson bore down his opponent by sheer weight, but more often Goldsmith sent his stone to its mark and made good his retreat. Sometimes his success turned on a mere trick; but often his replies were compact of sense and salt, as when he doubted Johnson's ability to write a fable because he would inevitably make the little fishes talk like whales. Goldsmith's wariness in conversation did not accompany him into the more practical walks of life. He was invariably in difficulties, pecuniary or social; partly through his generosity, in which he resembled his own Good-Natured Man, partly through his blind trust in the world. For Goldsmith was, in one sense at least, the

antithesis of Swift. He gave himself freely; he threw himself upon life with the naïve imprudence of a child. Whether traversing Europe as a penniless student or selling his masterpieces, Goldsmith took no thought for the morrow. And with this confidence in his fellows went a great love for them, a love apparent in all the writings into which he put his real self. His papers in *The Citizen of the World*, though, like Addison's, often directed against the faults and absurdities of men, have a tenderness which goes beyond Addison's mildness, a note of kinship that is very different from *The Spectator's* aloofness. Goldsmith's poems are written in the metre of Pope, but in spirit they are far removed from Pope's satirical hardness. In place of the savage sketches of Atticus and Bufo in *The Epistle to Arbuthnot*, we have the village parson in *The Deserted Village*. And it is to be noted that, though Goldsmith had no personal sympathy with the rising romantic school, his interest in remote, obscure, and unfortunate phases of human life, which appears in *The Traveller*, his championship of the individual against the institution which would crush him, in *The Deserted Village*, mark him as a precursor of the Romantic Movement.

"She Stoops to Conquer."

A criticism that has often been made of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* is that the picture of Auburn in its prosperity could never apply to an Irish hamlet. The same criticism might be applied more broadly to all his work. To him realism was impossible, because in his whole experience of life he invariably read the world in terms of his own idealism. This idealism gives its coloring to his novel, and also to his comedies. *She Stoops to Conquer*, the best known of them, presents us, soon after the opening of the play, with a riotous scene at the "Three Pigeons," led by the loutish squire, Tony Lumpkin. Two travellers appear, whom Tony directs to the house of his stepfather, Mr.

Hardcastle, as to an inn. The travellers are young Marlow, whom Hardcastle is expecting as the suitor for his daughter, and his friend Hastings. Hardcastle recognizes them; but Marlow, and Hastings also for a time, believe themselves to be in a hostelry, think Hardcastle is the host and his daughter the servant, and behave accordingly. The situation, however, favors the love-affair between Miss Hardcastle and Marlow; for the latter, who has never been able to conquer his bashfulness with ladies of condition, finds his path easy with the supposed barmaid.

The play is a charming idyl, in which the rough edges of the world are ground smooth, in which faults turn out to be virtues, and mistakes to be blessings. At times the stage-land copies the actual world with fidelity, as in the scene at the "Three Pigeons," and in the simple country life in Hardcastle's home. Tony Lumpkin is a genuine child of the soil. But the magic of comedy is over all, a magic indeed much subdued from the brilliant romanticism of Shakespeare's day, but still potent. For the sober theatre of the late eighteenth century, *She Stoops to Conquer* is a kind of prose *Tempest*, the most victorious assertion in its age of the mood of the idyl.

Goldsmith's plays are a reflection of the idealism which was beginning to manifest itself in the realistic age. Opposed to him is Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816), whose dramas are written in the mood of satirical observation of the surface of life which the eighteenth-century novel expressed, from Fielding to Miss Burney. Sheridan was born at Dublin of English-Irish stock. After a romantic runaway marriage he settled in London; and when only twenty-three he produced *The Rivals* and *The Duenna* (1775). In 1777, after his assumption of the directorship of Drury Lane Theatre, he put on his best play, *The School for Scandal*, and in 1779 *The Critic*.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

In *The Rivals* we have the immortal Mrs. Malaprop; her niece, Lydia Languish, the romantic heroine; and Lydia's lovers, Bob Acres, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, and Captain Absolute, the last masquerading under the name Beverley. Absolute thinks at first that he is loving in opposition to his father's will, and when he finds that Lydia is the very bride picked out for him, he continues to maintain with her his character of Beverley, as an appeal to her romantic spirit. The plot involves some absurdities, but it is fertile in amusing situations, and the play abounds in clever dialogue.

"The Rivals."

The School for Scandal opens in the eighteenth-century world of fashion, which, in its frivolous artificiality, lent itself readily to the purposes of the comedian. In this corrupt society Lady Teazle has, for form's sake, provided herself with a lover, Joseph Surface. Meanwhile Joseph, a cold-hearted hypocrite, has plans of his own, one of which is to marry Sir Peter Teazle's ward, Maria, and another to supplant his own brother Charles, a good-natured spendthrift, in their uncle's affection. The uncle, Sir Oliver, returns from India, introduces himself as a money-lender to Charles, whom he finds ready to sell even his family portraits, except that of Sir Oliver himself. This modest bit of loyalty serves to reinstate the prodigal in his uncle's good opinion; while Joseph, discovered on all sides, fades out of the play in disgrace.

"The School for Scandal."

It is evident that here we have an amusing mock world, where the principles, moral and social, on which human life is actually conducted are subordinated to the necessities of an intrigue. The characters bear an amazing similitude to real people; indeed, many of them have long been accepted as exact delineations of certain qualities and types; but we never forget while we are with them that we are in stage-land. At first sight *The School for*

Scandal, with its opening scenes in which gossip runs wild, seems to revive the world of the Restoration drama, but there is a difference. Light, trifling, frivolous as is Sheridan's society, it is not fundamentally and flagrantly immoral. His people play with fire, but they are not burned. So much had the moral and social force of the century accomplished, in the years since Collier's attack on the stage.

Edward Gibbon.

It may have been owing to the development of the magazine that the work of the men of Johnson's period was in general of so miscellaneous a character. From this charge, however, must be excepted Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), who is known for a single work. From his youth Gibbon believed in his destiny as a historian; and, like Milton, he sought long for a subject worthy of his powers. At last, while on a visit to Rome in 1764, the idea of writing a history of the decline and fall of the empire came to his mind. Four years later he began to work at this subject. In 1776 his first volume appeared, but it was not until after eleven years more of steady toil that the full six volumes were completed.

His Life and Work.

Gibbon is personally well known to us through his frank account of himself in his memoirs—a man with little dignity, or presence, or passion, or heroism. Yet in the light of his achievement his life stands out in almost heroic proportions. To his great task everything in his career was subsidiary. He served for a time in the militia, and he remarks that the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers was not useless to the historian of the Roman Empire. In like manner, he made his seat in Parliament merely a preparation for his work, "a school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian." It is this sureness of inspiration, this unity of accomplishment in Gibbon's life, that constitute his claim to something more than the

glory that belongs to literary success. In the light of his task his negative qualities become positive; his vices virtues. As an adaptation of means to end, Gibbon's life was a splendid performance.

His Merits and Defects.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire treats the history of Rome from the second century to the end of the fifth, and then, with a more rapid method, follows the Eastern or Byzantine Empire until the fall of Constantinople. Of Gibbon's scholarship there can be no complaint. He was completely master of his authorities, and his treatment of them is so discriminating, so fair, so thorough, that he cannot be superseded. Two serious faults in his work must be laid at the door of his century—his lack of philosophic insight and his lack of sympathy with spiritual movements. Like his contemporaries, he distrusted philosophy and disliked enthusiasm. Behind the facts, he did not care to penetrate; in the realm of emotion he was uncomprehending. Hence his dry, hard, inadequate treatment of Christianity, a treatment reflecting his own attitude and limitations. He had no spiritual interests; his point of view was consistently worldly.

His Style.

Gibbon's style is of the elaborate type introduced by Johnson. It is massive, solid, and exhaustive. It substitutes courtliness for ease, elegance for charm. Its excessive polish gives an effect of insincerity, at times almost of mockery. But, in the large, the effect of Gibbon's style is commensurate with the greatness of his theme. The rhythmic, unwearied march of the sentences, the flashing of antithesis, and the steady roll of the diction, are but pomp and circumstance befitting the stately procession of emperors and nations. Chief among Gibbon's literary qualities is his sense of structure, which shows itself in his faculty for handling large masses of material. He consciously composed by paragraphs, each one a unit, and each of just the right

weight. "It has always been my practice," he wrote, "to cast a long paragraph in a single mould, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of my pen till I had given the last polish to my work." This sense of exact structure, of outline, of organic development, shows itself still more in the astonishing architectural merit of the whole work. The ruin of the Roman Empire is in political history what the fall of man is in theology, and Gibbon, like Milton, has realized the epic possibilities of his theme.

If Gibbon is a monumental example of a small personality becoming by training and economy fit for the greatest achievement, a corresponding case of a great man expending his powers with apparent fruitlessness, because expending them on passing affairs, is found in the career of Edmund Burke (1729–1797). Goldsmith's epigram,

> Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind,

expressed the opinion of contemporaries as to Burke's career. Yet so penetrating was Burke's thought, and so noble its presentation that his results are of value to-day, irrespective of the occasions which called them forth.

Burke was a native of Ireland, and a Bachelor of Arts of Trinity College. He went to London as a student of law, but soon turned aside into literature. His first works were an ironical reply to Bolingbroke, called *A Vindication of Natural Society* and an *Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1756). In 1761 he entered politics as secretary of the Lord Deputy of Ireland; and later he became secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham, and member of Parliament. Although he never held high office, he was for years the brain of the Whig party in its effort to limit the exercise of the royal prerogative, which George III, with the assistance of the Tory party,

Edmund Burke.

was determined to extend. This was indeed the old question which went back to the time of the Plantagenets; but there were involved in it new problems, arising from the growth of England as a colonial power both in America and in India. It is Burke's peculiar distinction that he saw the dangers gathering over England from all quarters, and strove to avert them. He pointed out the one way of escape in the American situation. His speech on American taxation was delivered in 1774; his great speech on conciliation with America in 1775. When England emerged from the war against the coalition of European powers, with the loss indeed of America, but with victory in other quarters, Burke instantly began to press his inquiry into the circumstances of that triumph. The chief success of England had been in India, and the man who had won it was Warren Hastings. Against him Burke levelled his attack. Instead of thanking God that things had turned out so well, he asked why they had turned out well, on what principles the Indian Empire had been conquered and administered, and whether those principles were founded upon justice and humanity. In 1785 he delivered his great arraignment of English methods in India, in his speech on *The Nabob of Arcot's Debts;* and the following year he moved the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Two years later he opened the case before the House of Lords, and he continued to manage it until the acquittal of Hastings in 1795.

His Views on America and India.

Finally, when the dangers which Burke had apprehended from the internal state of England were realized in France, he threw himself toward the only safety which he could see, and led the opposition to the French Revolution. This attitude involved a separation from his party, but Burke took the step without flinching. His *Reflections on the French Revolution*, published in 1790, did

His Views on the French Revolution.

much to check the rising sympathy with the movement in England and on the Continent. He followed this with *Thoughts on French Affairs* (1791), *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (1792), and *Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1796–1797). In this opposition Burke took a larger point of view than that of mere insular prejudice. He believed that England had a world mission in stemming the tide of revolution, and in marshalling the forces of reaction in Europe. Right or wrong, the struggle of England against France between 1794 and 1815 is a splendid act in the drama of nations. It is scarcely too much to say that the leading rôle which England played in those years was cast for her by Burke. He wrote the lines which the cannon declaimed at Trafalgar and Waterloo.

There are thus three periods in Burke's career, in which his writings concerned successively America, India, and France: a first period of Cassandra-prophecy, of unheeded warnings, and despised advice; a second of vigorous pursuit of evil and vindication of justice; a third of desperate defense of the things he believed in, against the Revolution. In his first task he was almost utterly unsuccessful; in the second he won a qualified success amid apparent failure; in the third he was immensely victorious. In the first two Burke was distinctly ahead of his age; in the last he was behind it. Nevertheless, Burke's reactionary tendencies were the result of his character, and rested on the same practical philosophy that guided his thought in other matters.

His Political Thought.

For Burke was in character essentially moderate, conservative, and practical. His disposition was always to work with the materials which existed. He was opposed to doctrinaire theories, and to schemes of doubtful applicability. The French Revolution was, in one way, a manifestation of the rationalism of the eighteenth century; of the ten-

dency to try all things in society by reason alone, and to work out by experiments in government the theories which had been expounded by speculative philosophers. The Revolution was conceived in the spirit of Voltaire's belief that "they are the most pestilent of all enemies of mankind who discrown sovereign reason to be the serving drudge of superstition and social usage." To Burke, on the contrary, reason was by no means an adequate measure of humanity. He took account of other elements, even of prejudice, the foe of reason. "Through just prejudice," he says, "a man's duty becomes part of his nature." He held that social usage, even that superstition, might be a part of the wisdom of the ages. And for that wisdom, expressed in concrete form as institutions, the embodied result of long experience, Burke had immense reverence. He held that if institutions were to change, it must not be by the mere arbitrary promulgation of law. On the contrary he says: "If a great change is to be made in human affairs the minds of men will be fitted to it, the general opinions and feelings will draw that way, every fear, every hope will forward it."

His Connection with the Romanticists.

This reliance on the ultimate facts of human character, even its prejudices and weaknesses, this trust in life rather than in reason, mark a certain connection between Burke and the romantic school in literature. Still more is this connection emphasized by the imaginative power of Burke's sympathy; a sympathy which penetrated to the uttermost parts of the earth, making the wrongs of the American colonists and the sufferings of the Hindus as real to him as the conditions under which he himself lived. Another point of contact between Burke and the romanticists is his power of investing with interest and color the past experience of the race, and of making it appeal to the imagination. In short, Burke, like Scott

and Wordsworth, was a romanticist in feeling, though often reactionary in faith.

It is the feeling behind his thought that gives to Burke's style its curious, far-reaching eloquence. His substance is solid, massive, full of fact, apparently most refractory and inert; yet it is constantly brought to a white heat by the flame of his passion. No such style as his had been seen in England. He formed it indeed on the model of Bolingbroke, but he has a range of effects to which his master was a stranger—splendid imagery, irony, fervor, conviction; while in such technical matters as the articulation of his sentences and the direction of his paragraphs, Burke measured for the first time the rhetorical possibilities of English writing.

His Style.

With Burke the eighteenth century properly ends. He is the last of the group of great writers whose chief interest was in politics, and whose trust was in institutions. He died while defending, with apparent success, the work of the century against what seemed to him the forces of destruction. But although he uttered the formal doctrine of the eighteenth century, in his deeper thought he represents that spiritual gain with which humanity advanced into the nineteenth.

III

As Thomson, Collins, and Gray form a group of early romantic poets, so at the close of the century we find a similar group of later romanticists who illustrate the progress of the movement, and the richer fulfilment of its promise, and mark the transition to the great period of romanticism in the nineteenth century. They are George Crabbe, William Cowper, William Blake, and Robert Burns.

Later Romantic Poets.

George Crabbe (1754–1832), although he used the

couplet verse and considered himself a faithful member of the school of Pope, marks the advent of a new realism in the poetic treatment of human life. He was born in a poor fishing village on the German Ocean, and in his best early poem, *The Village* (1783), he painted the life of the poor as he knew it, sternly and uncompromisingly—the steaming flats and stubbly commons, the damp and dirty houses, the hostile sea, from which only a wretched living could be wrung, the men and women degraded by harsh labor and coarse dissipation. By his sincerity he drove the artificial sentiment of the age from one more of its strongholds. Crabbe was generously befriended by Burke, at a time when he was in dire distress; and through Burke's influence he was admitted to holy orders. He settled in the country, and for twenty-two years after his first success was completely silent. When he came forward once more, with *The Parish Register* (1807) and *Tales of the Hall* (1819), it was to find himself in a changed world, in which singers and seers far greater than he had transformed the face of literature; so that his country sketches and tales, written still in the old-fashioned couplet, looked oddly stiff and belated. But his work, at its best, is as sterling as it is ungraceful, and the earlier portion of it did good service in breaking up the artificialism of the eighteenth century.

George Crabbe.

His Realism.

A more potent but equally involuntary work of revolution was performed by William Cowper (1731–1800). He was a life-long victim of nervous despondency, and to this weakness was added an abnormal proneness to religious terror. His early life was spent at Westminster School, and as a law student in London. Fits of gayety and states of mystical exaltation were succeeded by terrible periods of depression, and at last by insanity. At the age of fifty-two he was living in the obscure village of Olney, where, under

William Cowper.

the care of a widow, Mrs. Unwin, several years his senior, he was spending a peaceful interval between two attacks of religious melancholia. As an intellectual pastime he began to write verse, in which he had some proficiency. At first he produced mere essays, in the dullest abstract style of the preceding age. At the suggestion of one Lady Austen, a bright and somewhat worldly woman who was attracted by his shy, distraught personality, he began a long poem in blank verse. The subject playfully suggested by Lady Austen was "The Sofa," an article of furniture then novel. Cowper dutifully "sang the sofa." But he did not cease there; he proceeded to paint with animated realism the landscapes, the changes of seasons, the human types and employments of the rural world about him, as well as his own simple pleasures and occupations. The poem was published in 1785 as *The Task*. A large portion of *The Task* is conventional enough, to be sure, and very dreary reading; but here and there one comes upon little vignettes—the figure of a teamster driving homeward in a snow-storm, a postman hurrying through the village with his eagerly awaited bag of news from the great world, ploughmen at work in the flat fields by the Ouse—which are instinct with vivid natural life. The amusing ballad of "John Gilpin" also belongs to this bright period of Cowper's life. He afterward relapsed into melancholy, broken at intervals by a ray of poetic inspiration such as that which produced his touching lines "On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture Out of Norfolk," deservedly the best known of his poems. His last poem, entitled "The Castaway," is a cry of despair from the depths of visionary anguish into which he was now hopelessly plunged.

"The Task."

While Crabbe and Cowper were at work, two other innovators, endowed with vast energy and working with superb self-confidence, were already passing beyond them. One of these was William Blake, an obscure London en-

graver; the other was Robert Burns, a Scotch ploughman.

William Blake.

William Blake (1757–1827), though a poet and a mystic of the most extraordinary genius, had little or no influence on his generation. The greater part of his message was so obscure, so wild, so incoherently delivered, that even now, after much study, his commentators have succeeded in making clear only a portion of what he wrote. He belonged to that type of mind which in superstitious ages is called "possessed." When a very young child he one day screamed with fear, because, he said, he had seen God put his face to the window. In boyhood he saw several angels, very bright, standing in a tree by the roadside. In his manhood, the earth and the air were for him full of spiritual presences, all concerned with his fate or with that of his friends. The following extract from some verses, written in mature manhood during a country walk, are exceedingly characteristic:

His Mysticism.

> With happiness stretched across the hills
> In a cloud that dewy sweetness distills;
> With a blue sky spread over with wings
> And a mild sun that mounts and sings;
> With trees and fields full of fairy elves,
> And little devils who fight for themselves;
> With angels planted in hawthorn bowers,
> And God himself in the passing hours;
> With silver angels across my way,
> And golden demons that none can stay;
> With my father hovering upon the wind,
> And my brother Robert just behind,—
> And my brother John, the evil one,
> In a black cloud making his moan;
> With a thousand angels upon the wind
> Pouring disconsolate from behind
> To drive them off,—and before my way
> A frowning thistle implores my stay . . .
> With my inward eye 'tis an old man grey;
> With my outward, a thistle upon my way.

This sounds like downright madness, but Blake was not mad in any ordinary sense of the term. With a metaphysical gift which made it natural for him to move in an ideal world, he combined a visual imagination of abnormal, almost miraculous power, which enabled him to give bodily form to abstractions, and to summon at any moment before him "armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk." Outwardly he led a regular, quiet, laborious life, all the while pouring out poems, drawings, and vast "prophetical books" full of shadowy mythologies and mystical thought-systems, which show that his inward life was one of perhaps unparalleled excitement and adventure. Leaving aside the prophetical books, which are too obscure to count for much in the history of literature, his fame as a poet rests chiefly on his *Poetical Sketches*, and on his *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Amid much that is unfinished, and no little that is baffling to the intelligence, these little volumes contain some of the simplest and sweetest, as well as some of the most powerful short poems in the language. At his best, Blake has a simplicity as great as Wordsworth's, and a magic which reminds us of Coleridge, combined with a depth and pregnancy of meaning peculiar to himself. It must be admitted that he is at his best very rarely, and then, as it were, by accident. In him the whole transcendental side of the Romantic Movement was expressed by hint and implication, though not by accomplishment.

What Blake did toward reclaiming lost realms of the spirit and the imagination, Burns did, in more signal degree, toward reopening lost channels of feeling. He was born in a two-roomed clay cottage in Ayrshire, West Scotland, in 1759. His parents were God-fearing peasants of the best Scotch type, who worked heroically to keep the wolf from the door, and to give their children an elementary education. At fifteen Robert, the eldest, did a grown man's work in

Robert Burns.

ploughing and reaping. Looking back upon his youth in after-years he described it as "the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing toil of a galley slave." But this is clearly an exaggeration, if not a total misrepresentation; for we have his youthful poems to prove him wrong. The youth who wrote the "Epistle to Davie," with its manly philosophy and genial temper, the "Address to the Deil," with its rich humor and fun, the "Cotter's Saturday Night," bathed in its tender light of fireside happiness, was neither a hermit nor a galley-slave, but simply a healthy, impetuous farm lad, with a warm heart, a rich nature, and a God-given genius for song. He had had a few books of poetry to read, and had heard, as every Scotch peasant hears, the floating ballad verse of the countryside. Then he had begun to rhyme, almost as spontaneously as a bird begins to sing, or, as he says himself, "for fun." Since he was a spontaneous, sincere, and absolutely original nature, the verses he strung together carelessly, as he followed his plough "in glory and in joy, along the mountain-side," were contributions to the world's spiritual experience; and since he was also a born master of words, they were contributions to the world's sum of beauty.

His Early Life and Poetry.

Between his twenty-third and his twenty-sixth year Burns wrote the larger portion of those poems which have made his name loved wherever the Lowland dialect is understood. In these he revealed with wonderful completeness the rural Scotland of his day, illuminated with a blended light of humor and tenderness the common experiences of his peasant world, not forbearing to treat its unedifying and even its scandalous phases with racy zest and laughing abandon. His large, genial nature embraces everything human in the world about him. He celebrates "Scotch Drink," holds up to laughter the praying hypocrite "Holy Willie," and paints the riotous

games of Hallowe'en; but he can turn immediately to mourn over the "wee, modest crimson-tipped flower" uprooted in the furrow on the mountainside, and to find in a field-mouse whose snug home has been broken up by the ploughshare a thing to touch the springs of human pity.

His Later Life: Songs.

By the time Burns had reached his twenty-sixth year his wild ways had got him into desperate trouble; his father was dead, and the hand-to-hand fight that he and his brother Gilbert were waging with poverty bade fair to end in absolute failure. Distracted and despairing, Burns determined to go to the West Indies. In order to raise the passage money, some one suggested that he should publish the poems which lay in his desk in the cottage at Mossgiel. This he did, his friends getting enough subscribers from among the local gentry to make the venture pay. Neither the author nor any one else hoped for more than a local popularity. The little book was published at Kilmarnock in 1786, with the title, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect.* The few pounds brought in by the small edition were in his pocket, and his trunk was sent forward, when a letter from Edinburgh arrived which changed the whole face of his fortunes. It was from an eminent scholar and critic, who praised the book highly and called for another and a larger edition. Burns posted to Edinburgh, heralded and fêted on the way like a hero of romance. A winter in the Scotch capital followed, during which the ploughman-poet was petted and lionized; and another winter during which his great friends cooled toward him as an exploited attraction. Then he went back to Ayrshire, with an appointment as "gauger" (inspector of the liquor customs) in his pocket, married Jean Armour, and settled down to the task of combining farming and revenue service with poetry. His duties as gauger covered ten parishes, and compelled him to ride two hundred miles a

week; what was worse, they threw him constantly into riotous company, where his wit and eloquence were always in uproarious demand. His farm naturally went to ruin, and he found time for little poetry except short snatches of song. With the exception of the "Jolly Beggars" and the immortal "Tam o' Shanter," Burns did no more sustained work. But in recompense he poured out hundreds of songs—drinking-songs, love-songs, songs of patriotism—some of which are among the eternal possessions of the race. Things went from bad to worse with him, and he died in 1796, at the age of thirty-seven, a self-defeated and embittered man. He saved others, himself he could not save. He poured into the world a current of feeling, electrical and life-giving. He revealed and made once more the heritage of all, the fountains of tenderness and passion, of natural tears and mirth; fountains never sealed to the simple and lowly, who are always "romantic" in any age and under any fashion of thought.

CHAPTER XII

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: THE NOVEL

The Novel and the Drama.

As the drama was the characteristic and natural literary expression of the Elizabethan age, so the novel has been the prevailing type of popular literature in the last two centuries. For this change there have been assigned various reasons. In the first place, it is clear that the dramatist works within limitations. He must put his material before the public in a few hours and on a small stage. He must make his personages tell their story and reveal their characters, without appearing in his own person. The novelist, on the contrary, is practically unlimited in time, space, or method. He can assume omniscience in the conduct of his story, revealing his characters by selections from their acts, speeches, and thoughts; even from the life which lies beneath their conscious thought. And above all, he can give his attitude toward life in his own authoritative interpretation of the meaning of the events which he narrates. Naturally, therefore, the novel lends itself more easily to the treatment of the great mass of interests and problems which make up modern life. Moreover, it is to be noted that the drama depends, to some extent at least, on the theatre. The English reading public in these latter days has become so extensive and so scattered that it has far outgrown the possibility of being served by such an institution as the theatre of Shakespeare's time, or even, let us say, as the French stage of to-day. Thus to the general causes for the predominance of the novel in the modern world must be added this physical reason, which applies with peculiar force to English literature.

To give a complete account of the modern novel we must go back to the stories of the Middle Age. These were in general of two kinds, adapted to two audiences, the nobles and the people. Of the first class were the romances clustering about such heroes as Charlemagne and King Arthur, and dealing with knightly adventure, mystical religious experience, and courtly love. These were told first in verse, later in prose. The *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory (1470) is the most comprehensive example of the knightly epic in England. Being written for people of leisure and culture, the romances of chivalry presented a highly imaginative, idealized view of life, in which strength, virtue, and passion were all of a transcendent and unnatural character. The fiction of the common people was decidedly more realistic. There were, first of all, moral tales, called *exempla*, many of them imported from the Orient, and collected for the use of the clergy in their sermons. The stories of knighthood were in part retold, often with the purpose of exhibiting in a cynical spirit the coarse human motives underlying chivalric achievement. A great parody on chivalric literature was the animal epic of *Reynard the Fox*, in which various animals replace the knights, and the fox by his cleverness triumphs over strength and valor. This element of trickery played a large part in popular fiction, being the motive of innumerable anecdotes turning on sharp answers and practical jokes. Sometimes the vices and follies of men were represented in short tales, in prose or verse; the hypocrisy of the clergy, for example, was a favorite subject. An idea of the range of mediæval popular fiction can be gained from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, or from the collection of stories made by Boccaccio in the *Decameron*. These prose stories were called in Italy *novelle*, from which term is derived our word novel. The spirit of burlesque aroused by the contrast between the

Mediæval Fiction.

ideals of chivalry and the affairs of actual life, led in Spain to the production of a form of story known as the picaresque romance (see page 91.) The typical Italian *novella* and the Spanish rogue story resembled each other in their realistic spirit, their emphasis on natural human motives, and to some extent on the manners of actual life. They are the source of the realistic novel of to-day, while what we call the *romance* looks back rather to the epic of chivalry for its beginning.

English Fiction of the Renaissance.

English fiction of the Renaissance was largely derived from the sources just mentioned. There were great numbers of translations of the Italian *novelle* and some translations of the Spanish rogue stories. There were romances founded on the careers of popular heroes, such as Robin Hood and Guy of Warwick. The first landmarks in English fiction of the Renaissance were Lyly's *Euphues* and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. The influence of all these may be seen in the work of Robert Greene, Thomas Lodge, and Thomas Nashe. (See page 91.) This literature existed for the primary object of entertaining its readers, but according to the standards of the time it was furnished with a moral or useful purpose, which was in general to teach men to live successfully in the world. These two ends were kept in view with much adroitness by authors and collectors of stories. For example, Robert Greene, while amusing his readers with accounts of criminal life in London, points out how necessary it is for them to learn of the snares and dangers of such life in order to avoid them.

English Fiction in the Seventeenth Century.

In the seventeenth century the English readers of fiction were chiefly supplied from France, where there had arisen a school of writers who told at great length, and with much sentimental and imaginative embroidery, the stories of the Grand Cyrus and other half-historical heroes. Of these tales the best known are those by Mlle. Scudéry.

In their exaggeration of heroism and in their artificiality they resembled the romances of chivalry which they succeeded, and in turn contributed to the taste for the heroic play. (See page 210.) Among the people the chief interest in the seventeenth century was the religious one; naturally, therefore, we find popular fiction of the period represented by the adaptation of the common type of story to the religious life. Bunyan's Pilgrim wanders through the world like the knight-errant or the Spanish rogue, meeting adventures. Like the knight he has a high purpose; like the rogue he mingles with people of every sort, and reflects in his journey the common sights and interests of English country life. Almost as notable a contribution to the development of modern fiction as *The Pilgrim's Progress* is Bunyan's autobiography, *Grace Abounding*. One of the chief elements of the novel is the study of character, and in this study the novelist has often found his most genuine material in the literature of confessions, among such examples of personal analysis and recorded spiritual experience, Bunyan's account is one of the most naïvely convincing and powerfully rendered.

The real beginning of the English novel took place in the eighteenth century with the work of Daniel Defoe (1661–1731). Defoe, like Bunyan, was a Dissenter, a thorough man of the people, a stranger to the ideals and refinements of aristocratic life. Moreover, in an age when the aim of the successful writer was to rise in the world and to gain aristocratic connections, Defoe seems to have been entirely willing to remain in his class, to serve it, and to write for it. He began life as a tradesman, but soon interested himself in politics, and held various offices under William III. In the early years of Queen Anne's reign he turned the arms of the Tories, who were in favor of a mild persecution of Dissenters, against themselves, by publishing

Daniel Defoe.

a pamphlet, *The Shortest Way with Dissenters*, in which he ironically advised the severest punishments for religious nonconformity. With an art which he showed later in his novels he concealed his real personality, and his work passed as that of a genuine Tory. The trick was discovered, however, and Defoe was punished by being placed in the pillory and imprisoned. He was released to enter the service of the government as a secret agent, perhaps as a spy, which office he held under different ministries. In 1704 he founded a newspaper, *The Review*, and after its cessation in 1713 he continued his connection with the press. As a clever journalist he published the lives of various people of interest to the public: of Peter the Great, for one; of Jonathan Wild, a notorious criminal and thief-taker, for another; of Captain Avery, a notable pirate, for a third. His life brought him into contact with all sorts of adventurers; being of a curious disposition and a retentive memory, he heard their stories and afterward wrote them out. When his material failed he drew upon his imagination; but he realized that he was writing for people who demanded fact, who perhaps thought it wrong to read fiction, and accordingly he tried to give every appearance of reality to his narratives.

"The Journal of the Plague Year."

The method by which he worked over from biography and history into fiction is illustrated by *The Journal of the Plague Year* (1722). In this work much of the material is authentic, gathered doubtless from many sources; but while a historian would have endeavored to base his account directly upon these various authorities, Defoe, as a story-teller, presents all his facts as the continuous experience of an imaginary narrator. So cleverly is this done that the personality of this character comes to be the most authoritative thing in the book; we believe in the horrors of the plague because we believe that the imaginary spec-

tator of them is truthful. In his power thus to produce a perfect illusion of reality, Defoe anticipates the later triumphs of great fiction. Many writers have used pestilence as one of the means of awakening terror in their readers; but Defoe has surpassed them, simply because he seems so earnestly intent on telling the mere truth, with no care for literary effect.

"Robinson Crusoe."

While working on the border line between biography and fiction, Defoe was attracted by the story of a sailor, Alexander Selkirk, who had been wrecked on an island in the Pacific, and had remained there for many years. This story suggested *The Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, which was published in 1719. Here again Defoe shows what a contemporary described as "the little art he is so truly master of, of forging a story and imposing it on the world for truth"; and here also the reason for his success is apparent. Defoe is always minute in his account of events and circumstances, and these circumstances, although not always the most important, are precisely those which the character who is telling the story would be likely to remember. In other words, Defoe is a master of the art of taking and keeping the point of view of his hero. Indeed, he seems to abdicate his rights as an author; to allow his hero to possess him. He throws himself completely into the situation of Crusoe, wrecked on the island. He foresees the dangers incident to such a situation, takes measures of precaution against them, indulges the natural hope of escape, and makes the wonderfully human mistake of building a boat too heavy for him to launch. He is absorbed in the trivial events of a solitary existence; he is filled with satisfaction at his miniature conquest of nature, and with horror at the frightful discovery of the human footprint in the sand. In fact, so utterly did he merge himself in Crusoe that, when his work was finished, he came to see in the struggles of the York mariner an

allegory of his own toilsome and dangerous experience of life.

Crusoe proved so successful that Defoe followed it the next year with the *Further Adventures*, and then with the *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*. In the next few years he also published a series of stories of adventure: *Captain Singleton* (1720), a tale of piracy; *Moll Flanders* (1722), the life of a thief and adventuress; *Colonel Jacque* (1722), and *Roxana* (1724). These stories are all picaresque in matter and in form. The hero, who is the narrator, constitutes the chief element of unity; the other characters appear and pass away, no attempt being made to work them into a plot. Defoe conceals his personality behind that of his hero, as he had done in the case of Crusoe; yet his personal attitude toward life appears in the purpose which each tale clearly has. Defoe was a Dissenter; he wrote for the descendants of Puritans, men in whom the interest in conduct and morality was strong. It is true, Puritanism, in its descent to the eighteenth century, had lost its ideal character. Defoe's morality is that of the bourgeois. He inculcates the utilitarian virtues; his aim is social usefulness. *Robinson Crusoe* is a manual of the qualities that have won the world from barbarism—courage, patience, ingenuity. In the minor novels these same practical virtues are exhibited, even in the pursuit of evil ends. Further, as Defoe takes pleasure in pointing out in his preface to *Moll Flanders*, it is well for good people to know the devices of evil in order that they may be on their guard against them. But beyond this Defoe has a moral ideal to which he makes most of his characters conform, by regarding their lives as warnings and subjects of repentance. This side of Defoe's ethics is less sincere than the other, and its appearance is rather an artistic blemish. In the case of Moll Flanders, who has been a great sin-

The Minor Novels.

Defoe's Morality.

ner, repentance seems inadequate; in that of poor Crusoe, who has done nothing worse than run away from home, it seems forced. Yet in both cases Defoe bears witness to a prevailing demand for the moralization of literature, a demand made by the English middle class for which he wrote, and of which he so eminently was.

Richardson's "Pamela."

One element of the modern novel Defoe's stories are without—they lack plot. Like the Spanish rogue stories, they are merely successions of adventures which befall the same hero. The first great success in constructing a story which should be guided throughout its course by a single motive, the love of one person for another, was *Pamela*, written by a London printer, Samuel Richardson (1689–1761). Richardson was asked by a publisher to write a series of letters which should serve as models for the correspondence and behavior of people in the lower walks of life. He did so; and, to add interest, he wrote them as the connected letters of a young serving-girl to her parents, telling the story of her temptation by her master, a certain Mr. B., of her resistance, and of her final triumph in marrying him. The book appeared in 1740, and was so popular that Richardson wrote a sequel, which described Pamela's experience as wife in a sphere much above that of her birth, her lessons in behavior suitable to that estate, and her plans for the education of her children. The moral and social purposes of the book are therefore successfully blended, though it must be admitted that Pamela's morality is of a rather calculating type.

"Clarissa Harlowe."

The success of *Pamela* encouraged the author to produce a second work of fiction, *Clarissa Harlowe*, which appeared in eight volumes in 1748. This is the story of a young lady, Clarissa Harlowe, who is at the outset the unwilling object of the attentions of a certain Lovelace. A quarrel has oc-

curred between him and Clarissa's brother, and to keep Lovelace from renewing the difficulty she continues to communicate with him. Her relatives, however, persist in distrusting her, and to secure her final separation from Lovelace they introduce a second suitor, an impossible creature named Solmes; and they resort to such measures of persecution to force her to accept him that she finally decides to flee to the protection of a friend. Unfortunately, she accepts the assistance of Lovelace, who kidnaps and ruins her. After many chapters of suffering she dies, leaving a vast heritage of remorse to be divided among her relatives and Lovelace.

Like *Pamela*, *Clarissa* is told by means of letters which pass between the different characters. Obviously, this method is in its nature dramatic; that is to say, the reader holds communication directly with the characters. In other ways it is clear that Richardson thought of the novel as an elaborated drama. He calls *Clarissa Harlowe* "a dramatic narrative"; and he does so very properly, for, as in a play, there is in *Clarissa* a definite catastrophe, every step toward which is carefully prepared for by something in the environment or the characters of the actors. Richardson could not, however, forego entirely the novelist's right to personal communication with his audience. He introduced footnotes in which he enforced his own view of the story, when he thought his readers likely to go astray. These comments were needed especially in reference to the two principal persons, whose characters show a degree of complexity to which the novel readers of that day were scarcely accustomed. In the case of Clarissa this complexity seems justified; in all her uncertainties, scruples, hesitations, still more in her humiliation and anguish, she appeals to us as a real woman; but Lovelace, though ingeniously constructed and consistent, is a mechanism.

Richardson's Method.

This discrepancy is, after all, natural; for Richardson knew women better than men. As a youth he wrote love-letters for girls. As a mature writer he worked in close connection with the female part of his audience. His circle of admirers began with his wife and a young lady who was staying at his house while he was composing *Pamela*. It widened with his fame, until it included even great ladies of fashion, who in person or by letter communicated with the old printer about the progress of his tales. They petted him, flattered him, and debauched him with tea; until the good Richardson lost himself in the Avalon which they provided, and forgot the world of action outside. So secluded did he become that at last he would communicate even with the foreman of his printing-house only by letter. Because of this seclusion Richardson's novels lack breadth and freshness. They deal with a petty world, a world of trifles and scruples, of Puritan niceties of conscience, of feminine niceties of sentiment and casuistries of deportment.

Richardson's Character.

The seriousness with which Richardson took himself as a novelist appears most markedly in his third novel, *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), which deals with the love-affair between the hero and a Miss Harriet Byron. Richardson, like Defoe, was of the middle class, and distinctly wrote for it. Two serious preoccupations of the English middle class at all times have been deportment and conscience. The first, as we have seen, was a social interest of great importance in the early eighteenth century, when England was learning the lesson of civilization. Richardson began his work with the humble design of teaching his readers to write, but his plan broadened until it covered the essentials of the art of living. Pamela lives a model life for servants; Clarissa is perfection in a higher sphere; Sir Charles Grandison is an illustration of the adaptation of aristocratic manners to middle-class instincts. But in addition

His Purpose.

Richardson's characters are all involved in intricate questions of conscience. Clarissa's course is determined only after elaborate discussion of the right and wrong of each step. In *Grandison*, it is only after the hero has dealt with a succession of difficult circumstances arising from the claims upon him of his friend, his friend's children, his sister, his ward, and his father's mistress, that he yields to his passion for Miss Byron. Richardson surely did not exaggerate when he declared the inculcation of virtue to be his first object.

It was something like disgust for Richardson's moral pretensions that led his contemporary, Henry Fielding, to enter upon his career as a novelist. Fielding was of higher birth than Richardson, his father being a soldier of some renown, and his grandfather the son of a peer; he had, too, a far wider and more varied experience of life. He was born in 1707, was educated at Eton, and afterward went to Leyden to study law. In 1727 he returned to London, where he supported himself for a while by writing plays. Deprived of his profession of playwright by the restrictions of the licensing act of 1737, he betook himself again to the study of law, meanwhile supporting his family by miscellaneous writing. His wife died in 1743, leaving him with two children. He struggled on until life was made somewhat easier for him by his appointment as police magistrate in London, in which office he was highly efficient. In 1754, broken in health, he left England for Portugal; he has left a pathetic account of this journey in his *Voyage to Lisbon*. He died the same year.

Henry Fielding.

It was while Fielding was earning his bread by various literary ventures that Richardson's *Pamela* appeared. Struck by the sentimentality of the book, its narrow view of life, and the shallowness of its ethics, he began to write a burlesque upon it, in which he subjected Pamela's brother, Joseph Andrews, to the same temptation from his mistress that Pamela

"Joseph Andrews."

suffered from her master. Like Pamela, Joseph resists; but unlike her he is turned out-of-doors, and is left to make his way back to his home in the country. Fielding soon lost sight of his narrowly satirical purpose in the broader attempt to picture the rough English life of post-roads, inns, and country houses. He is not careful of the structure of his story. The adventures of Joseph with his companion, Parson Adams, do not all advance the plot; minor characters introduce digressions, and the ending is merely a series of happy accidents. Yet, on the other hand, Fielding writes of real men and women with a precision that comes from direct observation. His pictures are often caricatures—as, for example, Mrs. Tow-wouse, the innkeeper, and Trulliber, the hog-raising parson—but they are caricatures that tell the truth.

Fielding's next novel, *Jonathan Wild*, was a loose narrative, suggested by the life of the famous rascal whom Defoe had celebrated, and written to burlesque the conception of greatness held by ordinary writers of biography. In his last two stories, however, *Tom Jones* (1749) and *Amelia* (1751), Fielding developed genuine plots. The former opens with the discovery of the hero as a new-born baby in the house of a virtuous gentleman, Mr. Allworthy. Here he grows up with Allworthy's nephew Blifil, who out of jealousy ruins Tom's reputation with his benefactor, and gets him turned out into the world. Meanwhile Tom has fallen in love with the daughter of a neighbor, Miss Sophia Western, who returns his love in spite of the opposition of her father. Tom travels to London, with many wayside adventures; he passes, not unscathed, through various temptations; and finally, by the discovery of the secret of his birth and the revelation of Blifil's villainy, he is advanced to his happy fortune, the favor of Allworthy and marriage with Sophia.

"Tom Jones."

In all this the chief source of unity is the persistence of

the hero through a long train of incidents. It is true, many of these incidents contribute to unravel the complication; and of the many characters whom the hero gathers about him in his progress, he holds a goodly number to the end. Still, the book is constructed in the loose epic manner, with little of the dramatic precision of form which appears in *Clarissa*. Moreover, Fielding, in contrast to Richardson, believed that the novelist should hold the freest, most uninterrupted communication with his readers; and accordingly he breaks his narrative by what are, in effect, brief essays, giving his opinions on the conduct both of fiction and of life. With this view of the novel as a literary form, Fielding's successors in England have in the main agreed; and thus it may be said that in structure *Tom Jones* rather than *Clarissa* is the typical English novel.

"Amelia."

Amelia is the story of a good wife, who, in spite of temptation, remains faithful to a good-natured but rather light husband, Captain Booth. The temptation is repeated several times, in almost the same form, in the course of the book. The happy ending, by which it appears that Amelia was really the preferred daughter of her mother, and that she has been kept out of her inheritance by the treachery of her sister, is almost a repetition of the Blifil episode in *Tom Jones*. The famous scenes in which Amelia and her children wait in vain for Booth to come, not only repeat each other, but also bear close resemblance to similar scenes in the Heartfree family in *Jonathan Wild*. Finally, Booth is Tom Jones grown older but no wiser, and Amelia is only a developed portrait of which Sophia Western is the sketch. In short, *Amelia* shows Fielding's weakness as a novelist. He was not copious in invention, either in respect to the outer or the inner life. He was primarily an observer; his great strength is in the Rubens-like fertility with which he peopled his world. He saw men

and women from the outside, and he was fascinated by their appearance. For the refinements of the novelist's art, for the problems of motive and influence, he had little use. Motives that were not apparent he was content to leave unrevealed; and he confined himself by preference to the simple, epic manner of telling his story. The forces which guide his characters are, for the most part, natural human needs, for it was these that Fielding knew best. His abounding physical vigor was, in fact, the greatest of his gifts. It furnished him with unusual keenness of sense, and enabled him to apprehend and portray the primary facts of life with extraordinary vividness and frankness.

Fielding's Qualities as a Novelist.

This physical keenness was the source of Fielding's rather coarse realism; a realism that was in thorough keeping with the sense of fact of the age, and which Fielding possessed, as did his contemporaries, Swift and Pope, to the exclusion of interest in the spiritual, the unworldly. And with Fielding's realism must be connected his moral indifference, his acceptance of things as they are. Of the smug, prudish morality that the eighteenth century accepted for literary purposes, Fielding would have nothing. He threw it aside, and presented man full length as he found him. Yet though he portrayed men with no reservations, he never forgot that he was one with them. From this inborn sympathy comes his large, tolerant way of looking at things, a view of life that often finds relief in raillery, but never in cynicism. He laughs, but his laughter is never inhuman like Swift's; and it is always ready to give place to tenderness and pity. For him the tragedy of life lay in the appearance of virtue and innocence in a world of evil, cruelty, and deception. In his presentation of this tragedy Fielding is always direct, sincere, and simple. The scene in which Amelia prepares supper for Booth, and when he does not come puts aside the wine

Fielding's Character.

untasted to save a sixpence, while her husband is losing guineas at the gaming-table, is far more moving than are the complicated woes of Clarissa. It is this humanity, the most essential quality of the novelist, that makes Fielding's work permanently engaging and powerful.

It was in human sympathy that Fielding's successor was most notably deficient. Tobias Smollett (1721–1771) was a Scotchman, a physician who failed in his profession on account of his irascible temper, and who accordingly took up the practice of literature. His first novel was *Roderick Random* (1748), a tale of adventure, in which he made use of much of his own experience. He had been surgeon's mate on a man-of-war; accordingly, after describing Roderick's youth in Scotland, he sends him to sea, taking the opportunity to insert some vivid descriptions of naval life. The hero participates in the continental wars of George II, visits Paris, goes to South America, where he discovers a conveniently rich father, and returns to England to marry the waiting heroine, Narcissa.

Smollett's "Roderick Random."

Roderick Random is merely a succession of adventures, related by the hero. Of precisely the same type is Smollett's next novel, *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), except that the author tells the story. His third, *Ferdinand, Count Fathom* (1753), is more elaborate in plot, for there are two heroes, Ferdinand, a type of cruelty and mischief, and Renaldo, a type of colorless respectability. Smollett's last novel, *Humphrey Clinker*, published in 1771, after his death, is in many respects his best. The element of plot is slight, the story being sustained chiefly by the course of mild adventures attending the journeys of a Welsh family through England and Scotland. These journeys, however, give Smollett an opportunity to describe men and things; and as a contemporary record and comment on life and manners the book is of decided interest. More-

Smollett's Later Novels.

over, the temper in which life is presented in *Humphrey Clinker* is less harsh than in the earlier books. In general, however, Smollett lacked humor and geniality. Fun of a ferocious sort, cruel practical jokes, abound among his incidents, making us feel that the spirit which could find pleasure in them must have been a savage one. Furthermore, since such incidents frequently have no connection with the plot, and are introduced for their own sake, they must be set down as gratuitously unpleasant. Smollett's early heroes are cruel and passionate, but otherwise colorless, and always unsympathetic. His heroines are mere dolls. His best characters are his humors, men and women who stand each for a single quality or mannerism, and who respond to every stimulus in precisely the same way, like figures in a comic opera. Among the best of these humors are the characters in *Humphrey Clinker*—Matthew Bramble, the irascible Welsh misanthropist, his sister Tabitha, Win Jenkins, the maid, who exhausts the possibilities of fun in English misspelling—and the sailor characters, Admiral Trunnion in *Peregrine Pickle*, Bowling and Pipes in *Roderick Random*. Smollett's chief contribution to the novel was his enlargement of its area, and the introduction of at least one special interest, the sea, as furnishing special types of character and incident.

Laurence Sterne.

It is possible to classify the novels thus far mentioned according as they advance beyond, or revert to, the simple biographic story, in which the element of unity is the persistence of the hero. We next come to a book in which even this element of structure is lacking, which only by an extension of the term can be called a novel at all. The first two volumes of *The Life and Adventures of Tristram Shandy* appeared in 1760. The author, a clergyman, Laurence Sterne (1713–1768), began it, as he says, "with no clear idea of what it was to turn out, only a design of shocking people

and amusing myself." This ill-regulated book was a product of Sterne's ill-regulated existence. His father was a petty officer in the army, and he himself, born in barracks, spent his sickly youth in moving from one military station to another. He was sent to Cambridge, and thence drifted into the church, obtaining a small living in Yorkshire, where, he says, "books, fiddling, painting, and shooting were my chief amusements." *Tristram Shandy* made him famous. He was courted and flattered in London, promoted in the church, and well received at Paris, for *Shandy* was an international success. Meanwhile he continued his book, putting into it material of any sort which he happened to have on hand. His health failing, he spent a year in southern France. Part of the experiences of his journey he turned into the seventh volume of *Shandy*, part he saved for a book of travels called *The Sentimental Journey*, of which two volumes appeared in 1768, just before his death.

"Tristram Shandy."

Tristram Shandy is not a novel in the proper sense of the word. Elements of the novel it has, characters and incidents, but these are not bound together into a coherent story. The book is without plan; without beginning, progress, or end. In the fourth volume the hero laments that though he is a year older than when he began to write, he has not got beyond his first day's life. The author shifts arbitrarily from one character to another, begins conversations in the middle, interrupts them with little essays full of odd learning, prepares for stories which are never told and scenes between his characters which are never acted. He introduces a new character, the Widow Wadman, with whom Tristram's Uncle Toby falls in love, by a blank page, on which the reader can write his own description. The style is given over to mannerism, abounds in trick and innuendo, and has none of the formal regularity which had marked written prose since the time of Dry-

den; but is full of the suggestiveness, the half-lights, of brilliant talk. Like Sterne's life, the book is an exaltation of whim. In his life and in his art he was without any sense of propriety, without respect for the conventions which the eighteenth century was so much interested in establishing. His moral tone is that of the Restoration; his style reminds one of the early seventeenth century. Altogether he represents a reaction from the rigid standards, moral and artistic, of Addison and Richardson.

Sterne's Sentimentalism.

Writing thus directly from his temperament, at the suggestion of his moods, Sterne is curiously subjective. For example, he treats passion, not because it exists as a cardinal fact of life, but because he can draw from it a stimulus for himself and his readers. His humor, too, arises not from a broad vision of the world as comedy, but from a personal sense of the incongruous suggestions that hang about simple, commonplace, or even tragic circumstances. He sits down to weep beside the poor insane Maria, who stares alternately at him and at her goat. "Do you see any resemblance?" he asks. Again, his pathos is not the sympathy of the strong man who weeps because he must. His tears are not wrung from him by the tragedy of existence; on the contrary, he goes about seeking occasion for feeling. He is thus the chief of sentimentalists, of those who write not to picture the world as it is, but to draw from it suggestions for certain moods and feelings. This attitude, which became for a time a leading fashion in literature, found its model largely in *Tristram Shandy*.

His Humanity.

But there is a stronger reason than this for Sterne's influence. He has a wonderful power of imparting genuine human quality to his characters, through all the eccentricities of their lives and surroundings. He makes no use of the ordinary material of the novelist—of men's desires, passions, political or religious beliefs, social relations, success or failure.

His characters live in a world of their own. Tristram's father is absorbed in curious learning and speculation; his Uncle Toby is occupied in acting out in his garden, with the aid of his servant, Corporal Trim, the battles and sieges that he has seen. And yet these characters live—live by virtue of the most adroit suggestion of humanity, in their speech, their appearance, their gestures and attitudes. With his usual self-consciousness Sterne calls attention to his method, a method new in eighteenth-century literature. "You perceive," he says, "that the drawing of my Uncle Toby's character went on gently all the time—not the great contours of it—that was impossible—but some familiar strokes and faint designations of it were here and there touched on as we went along, so that you are much better acquainted with my Uncle Toby now than you were before." By this method Sterne gives to his characters an abiding reality and charm. They have, with the characters of Cervantes and Shakespeare, with Quixote and Falstaff, the note of highest artistic distinction. They are among the very few "creations" of literature.

Sterne's habit of playing directly upon the sensibility of his readers was freely imitated. The most notable instance of such imitation is found in *The Man of Feeling* (1771) by Henry Mackenzie. This book shows also the influence of Sterne's loose structure, though Mackenzie explains the breaks in his story by the theory of a mutilated manuscript. The hero's faculty for finding tragedy in the lot of man, and his morbid emotion over it, connect the book with the "graveyard poetry" of the precursors of the Romantic Movement.

Mackenzie's "Man of Feeling."

Signs of a possibly conscious reaction toward a more wholesome view of life than Sterne's are to be found in a book as famous as *Tristram Shandy*—Oliver Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). *The Vicar of Wakefield* is a

perfect expression of homely English sentiment. That sentiment naturally gathers about the family life. The Vicar and his wife and children are thrown into poverty. Worse misfortune comes in the flight of the elder daughter, Olivia, who is lured away by an unworthy lover; in the burning of their poor house; in the imprisonment of the father for debt. But through all these troubles shines the Vicar's love for his family and his confidence in life; and at the end his faith in the best of all possible worlds emerges triumphant. The Vicar is, it is true, the only character in the book. The Vicar's wife and children; young Squire Thornhill, and his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who wanders through the book in an impossible incognito; the convenient Jenkinson, who has craftily made of Olivia's mock marriage a real one—all these are shadowy forms of which we get but glimpses as they cross the light of the Vicar's steady personality. The Vicar animates not only the characters but the spirit and purpose of the book. Goldsmith is not a realist. To him, as to Sterne, the positivism of the early century, with its demand for the presentation of life as it is, made no appeal. His world is an ideal one. Troubles and disasters accumulate like threatening clouds, but only to resolve themselves into beneficent showers. Suffering is not a problem; it is merely an artistic device to make the world seem more beautiful. Evil loses its essential quality; Olivia is married to a rake who does not love her, but even this we accept confidently as a part of the happy outcome, so contagious is Goldsmith's optimism.

Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield."

Goldsmith used one element of the Arcadian romance, and made of it a distinct contribution to the modern novel. The element of outdoor scene had been largely neglected by his predecessors. Richardson had shown care and skill in the arrangement of his interiors; Fielding had given a few

His Use of Scene.

set pieces of description, showing the preference of eighteenth-century taste for artificial over natural beauty; but Goldsmith pictured nature with real feeling for it. He made it, especially in the early idyllic scenes of his novel, a happy reinforcement of his theme of domestic bliss and tranquillity; and it is, throughout the book, a symbol of the eternal goodness of the world, another reason for putting trust in life.

Miss Burney.

With the possible exception of lyric poetry, the novel is the form of literature which has been most successfully practised by women. In the period before Defoe, the most popular writers of romance were women—Mrs. Behn and Mrs. Manley. Miss Sarah Fielding, sister of the novelist, wrote a story, *David Simple*, which both Richardson and Fielding praised. Later in the century the line of realists, broken by Sterne and Goldsmith, was continued by Miss Fanny Burney (1752–1840), whose first story, *Evelina*, appeared in 1778. Doctor Johnson, who was her father's friend, liked the book, and his support had much to do with its immediate success, though his influence on the style of her later books cannot be called happy. With an achieved literary reputation, Miss Burney, who had been glad to get twenty pounds for *Evelina*, sold her second book, *Cecilia* (1782), for £250. Soon after this she became a maid of honor to Queen Charlotte; and after escaping from the intolerable constraints of this situation she married General D'Arblay, by whose name she is usually known. At long intervals she followed her early works with two others, which are now forgotten, but her *Diary* remains one of the important documents of the time.

Her Novels.

Evelina is the story of a young girl's introduction to the great world, told chiefly by herself in letters to her guardian. Her path is beset by rival suitors, and made doubtful by a mystery about her own birth; but her course is guided steadily by conscience

and propriety. Indeed, both Evelina and Cecilia are of the family of Clarissa: both are a bit prudish, overscrupulous, oversensitive. The other characters are men and women drawn from nature, as Macaulay says, but not from life, each being developed in accordance with a single dominant passion or peculiarity. Like her model, Richardson, Miss Burney wrote to correct the evils of the time. Her minor characters were intended to make various faults and affectations contemptible or ridiculous, through an extravagant presentation of them. But as the element of truth is largely present in successful satire, it follows that Miss Burney's novels give us fair pictures of the age in which she lived. In *Evelina* we see reflected the uncouthness of the middle classes, the boorishness of their amusements, and their fondness for practical jokes; and in *Cecilia* the studies of contemporary life are still more detailed. Altogether Miss Burney's work will live, if not by its intrinsic interest, at least as a document of importance in the social history of England.

The Romantic Movement.

The novel of the eighteenth century from Defoe to Miss Burney was, on the whole, conceived on lines which made it acceptable to the positive, matter-of-fact temperament of the age. The novelists endeavored to deal with things as they were, though they usually claimed the purpose of making them better. Toward the close of the century, however, the novel felt the stimulus of a new spiritual force, the Romantic Movement.

As has already been noted, the Romantic Movement showed its influence in a return to nature, in absorption in the remote in time and space and a revelling in the attendant emotions of awe and wonder, in emphasis on the individual, however humble, and his defense against society. All of these forces are reflected in fiction of the period. The new interest in nature made scene an im-

portant element in the novel; the interest in the past brought into being a new type of fiction, the gothic, the ancestor of the historical novel; the interest in the individual defined a great class of books as pre-eminently novels with a purpose. Accordingly, therefore, we find at the close of the century three types of fiction. In addition to the realistic novel, which dealt with social life and manners, there was the romance, which represented the purely emotional interest in nature and in the past, and the humanitarian novel, which seriously undertook to right the wrongs sustained by the individual at the hands of society. These three objects, to paint life, to escape from life, and to make life better, have defined three schools, the realists, the romancers, and the missionaries, which have continued, with innumerable cross divisions, until the present time.

The long list of romances of the period begins with *The Castle of Otranto*, published as early as 1764. It was the work of Horace Walpole (1717–1797), one of the leaders of that fashion which, in its preference for the grotesque and barbarous instead of the classically simple and civilized, was called "gothic." In *The Castle of Otranto* he tried to paint the domestic life and manners of the feudal period, "as agitated by the action of supernatural machinery such as the superstition of the time might have accepted." With this excuse for the introduction of supernatural elements, no explanation of them by rational causes is needed, and none is attempted. A portrait steps from its panel and walks abroad, a statue sheds blood, a helmet of gigantic size crashes down into the courtyard, and gives symbolical accompaniment to the action of the story by dreadfully waving its plumes, all without the least apology from the author. His only effort is to give an air of reality to such impossibilities by making his characters natural, and by painting the manners of the

Walpole's "Castle of Otranto."

time faithfully. In neither attempt was he highly successful. That he did give his readers a genuine attack of the horrors, however, is proved by excellent testimony, for example, that of his friend, Thomas Gray. For the rest, Walpole gave to the gothic romance the elements on which it was to thrive for a generation to come—a hero sullied by unmentionable crimes, several persecuted heroines, a castle with secret passages and haunted rooms, and a plentiful sprinkling of supernatural terrors.

Another book of importance in the development of romantic fiction is *The History of the Caliph Vathek* (1784), written by William Beckford (1759–1844). This tale added to the attractions of remote time those of a distant and marvellous land; it substituted for the creations of mediæval superstition the mysteries of oriental necromancy; and it spiced the whole with a dash of eastern voluptuousness. Gothic romances were also produced by Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818), whose *Monk* (1795) was the most popular book of its time, and whose *Bravo of Venice* (1804) has for its hero a distinct precursor of the Byronic type, an individual developed into a quite transcendent personality by feeding on his wrongs and crimes.

Other Gothic Romances.

The most successful producer of gothic stories was Mrs. Anne Radcliffe (1764–1823), who in the last decade of the century wrote five elaborate romances, the most famous being *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797). These have the faults and virtues of their type. They abound in mysterious incident, skilfully used; but they show an increasing tendency toward finding a rational explanation for apparently supernatural occurrences. In plot they are carefully constructed to keep the reader guessing as to which of several possible explanations is the true one. They are decorated with elaborate set pieces of description, involving the romantic elements of

Mrs. Radcliffe.

Italian landscape, as treated by the painters Claude or Salvator Rosa; but there is no accuracy in the local color, which is lavishly used, and no historical truth in the representation of manners and institutions of the past. The characters are either extravagantly false or mildly conventional. Of Elena, in *The Italian*, we are told that "her features were of the Greek outline, and though they expressed the tranquillity of an elegant mind, her dark blue eyes sparkled with intelligence." Beyond this the stereotyped formula can hardly go.

Although Walpole in his preface to *The Castle of Otranto* points a moral for his readers, the gothic romance is frankly without any purpose save that of amusing. A far more strenuous development of the novel was going on at the hands of the group of revolutionary romanticists, of whom William Godwin (1756–1836) was the chief. With them the novel became a tract; it was put out simply as propaganda. The plot was arranged, and the characters were drawn, to expose a social evil or to show its remedy. Naturally, such books subordinated art to purpose, and for that reason few of them are remembered. A special class of such reforming novels was devoted to the bringing up of youth. This had been a leading theme in English prose literature from the time of the Renaissance, but whereas the early systems of education had been based on the study of the classics, as fitting a boy to take his proper place in formal society, the new education emphasized the place of nature and experiment in the child's development. In this "return to nature" the influence of the story *Emile* (1762) by the French philosopher Rousseau counted for much. A favorite plan of novelists devoted to this form of propaganda was to set in opposition two children, one brought up in the conventions of society, and the other in the freedom of nature, and show the advantage of the latter at all points. The chief

The Revolutionists.

of these educational novels are *The Fool of Quality* (1766) by Henry Brooke, *Sandford and Merton* (1783–1789) by Thomas Day, and *Nature and Art* (1796) by Elizabeth Inchbald.

Many other aspects of society were brought under criticism by the novelists in the period of the French Revolution, including government, marriage, private property. The strongest book of this class was William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794). Godwin was one of the most earnest supporters in England of the French Revolution. He wrote *Caleb Williams* as a tract against the British Constitution and the ideals of aristocratic society, which Burke fought so hard to maintain. The real hero, Falkland, under great provocation has committed a murder, and in obedience to the false god of his class, Reputation, he has allowed a poor peasant to suffer the penalty for it. By accident his secretary, Caleb Williams, becomes possessed of the secret, and in self-preservation Falkland feels bound to crush him. The author gives a forcible account of the way in which an aristocrat like Falkland can use the forces of society and law against an individual of a lower class; and he presents movingly the sufferings of such an individual under this persecution. But more moving still is the picture of the ruin of a benevolent and elevated character by the possession of aristocratic power, and by subjection to aristocratic prejudices. The villain in the book is chivalry, and Falkland, even more than Williams, is its victim.

Godwin's "Caleb Williams."

CHAPTER XIII

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE TRIUMPH OF ROMANTICISM

I

The Romantic Movement, the beginnings of which have been traced in the preceding chapter, was by no means confined to literature. In England the religious revival under John Wesley, in Germany the new philosophy put forth by Emanuel Kant, in France the immense social upheaval of the French Revolution, all were symptoms, early or late, of the same great influence working for liberation. The French Revolution brought to Europe the hope of political freedom and social reconstruction, and though the hope was disappointed in the accession to power of Napoleon, its place was taken by the enthusiasm of the struggle of the nations against him in which England took the chief part. The first years of the nineteenth century were marked by the greatest national crisis which England had experienced since the days of Elizabeth. As then the country was confronted by Spain, under Philip II, seeking to become a world-power, and to impose its religious ideals on Europe; so at the threshold of the nineteenth century she found herself face to face with France under Napoleon, seeking to gain a similar leadership and to impose a world-system. As the struggle with Spain led to an extraordinary outburst of patriotism, so did the war with Napoleon; and the apex of national glory reached in the destruction of the Armada was touched again at Trafalgar and Waterloo. And in both cases the falling off was rapid. The victory of Europe over Napoleon was attended by an attempt at political reaction which threatened to undo

The "Romantic Movement."

all that the French Revolution had accomplished for the rights of man. Accordingly, we must divide the first third of the nineteenth century into two periods: one of enthusiasm, characterized by the work of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott; and one of disillusionment and revolt, of which the younger group of romanticists, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, were in various ways typical.

Double Aspect of the Movement Illustrated by Coleridge and Wordsworth.

The Romantic Movement has already been defined as an escape of the individual from the conventional, a "return to nature," a welcoming back into life of all that was spontaneous and sincere; a reassertion of the right of man to indulge all his spiritual instincts, even the wildest and most wayward. This reassertion naturally took two directions: one outward, toward whatever was remote and unusual, one inward, into the heart of common things, which, when looked at closely, were found to be full of new meanings. These two impulses found expression in the work of the two poets in whom the English Romantic Movement first became conscious of its real aims—Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) and William Wordsworth (1770–1850). A happy chance brought these two poets together in the impressionable period of their young manhood, when Coleridge was twenty-five and Wordsworth only two years older. Both had felt the storm and stress of the revolutionary age. Each brought to the other just that kind of stimulus needed to kindle his mind to creative activity; and together they gathered the diffused and uncertain rays of the new poetic illumination into an orb of steady splendor. In them the new poetry first found an adequate and unmistakable voice; and the little volume called *Lyrical Ballads*, which they published together in 1798, shows the two impulses of the new poetry in full play. Coleridge's contributions treat mysterious, supernatural subjects in such a way as to give to them an unparalleled illusion of real-

ity; Wordsworth's treat simple, every-day themes of nature and human life in such a way as to reveal in them unsuspected elements of mystery and awe.

Early Life of Coleridge.

Coleridge was born at Ottery Saint Mary's, Devonshire, in 1772. He had a precocious boyhood as a "blue-coat" at Christ's Hospital, the famous charity school in London. While at Cambridge he plunged, with his friend Robert Southey, then a student at Oxford, into the generous enthusiasms aroused by the French Revolution. After graduation the two young idealists, in their ardor for social reform, conceived a grand scheme of "pantisocracy," which they dreamed of realizing in the shape of a utopian community to be established across the ocean, on the banks of the Susquehanna. Preliminary to emigration Coleridge published a volume of juvenile verse, and married; by 1797 he had a young family on his hands, and had exchanged pantisocracy for a tiny cottage in the village of Nether Stowey, in the Quantock hills. In 1797 Wordsworth, together with his wonderful sister Dorothy, moved to Alfoxden, in order to be near Coleridge, whom he had met a year or two before. To Wordsworth the companionship meant much; to Coleridge it meant everything. Under the bracing influence of Wordsworth's hardy, original mind, supplemented by the quick sympathy and suggestiveness of Dorothy, Coleridge shot up suddenly into full poetic stature. In little more than a year (1797–1798) he wrote all his greatest poems, "Genevieve," "The Dark Ladie," "Kubla Khan," "The Ancient Mariner," and the first part of "Christabel."

His Later Life.

The rest of Coleridge's life, though he wrote a good deal of verse, has little importance in the history of poetry. He made a trip, in the Wordsworths' company, to Germany, and there became absorbed in the philosophy of Kant. So far as his later life had any definite purpose, it was spent in

interpreting the principles of this philosophy to his countrymen. His bondage to the opium habit, added to an inherent weakness of will, made his life a heartrending succession of half-attempts and whole failures. He planned many books, and partly executed a few; but his chief influence was exerted in talk with his friends, and with those young men who, as his reputation for transcendental wisdom increased, resorted to him as to an oracle of hope and faith, in the years which followed the failure of the French Revolution. By consent of all who heard him Coleridge was one of the most wonderful talkers that ever lived. His verse, fragmentary and of small bulk though it is, gives him rank as one of the world's great poets.

Characteristics of His Poetry.

As has been said above, Coleridge represents perfectly that side of the romantic imagination which seeks to lose itself in dream and marvel; to conjure up a world of phantasmal scenery and of supernatural happenings, illuminated by "a light that never was on sea or land." "Kubla Khan" paints an oriental dream-picture, as splendid and as impalpable as the palaces and plunging rivers and "caverns measureless to man," which we sometimes see lifted for a moment out of a stormy sunset. "Christabel," which seems in its fragmentary form to have been planned as the story of a young girl fallen under the spell of an unearthly demon in woman's shape, moves in a mediæval atmosphere blended of beauty and horror—a horror poignantly vague, freezing the heart with its suggestion of all that is malign and cruel in the spirit world. "The Ancient Mariner," Coleridge's one finished masterpiece, stands almost alone in literature for the completeness with which it creates an illusion of reality while dealing with images and events manifestly unreal. Its great pictures of night and morning, of arctic and tropic seas; its melodies of whispering keel and rustling sails,

and of dead throats singing spectral carols; its strange music, richer and more various even than that of "Kubla Khan," though not so grand and spacious—these characteristics, to say nothing of the fruitful lesson lying at its heart, make "The Ancient Mariner" a poem with scarcely an equal in its kind. It is manifestly a dream, but a dream caught in a magic mirror, which holds it spellbound in immortal freshness. "The Ancient Mariner" was Coleridge's chief contribution to *Lyrical Ballads;* in itself it represented a whole domain splendidly conquered for the reawakened imaginations of men.

Wordsworth's Life.

William Wordsworth was born in 1770, at Cockermouth in Cumberland, and he received his early education at the country grammar-school at Hawkshead, in the Lake region. After leaving the University of Cambridge in 1791 he spent nearly two years in France, watching with enthusiastic hope the middle stages of the French Revolution, and sharing in the ardent social enthusiasm which summed itself up in the motto of the revolutionists, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." He was in Paris late in 1792, before the awful excesses of the Reign of Terror began; and he was on the point of throwing in his lot with the revolutionists when a stoppage of his funds compelled him to return to England. The failure of his hopes and plans, personal and political, induced in him a profound despondency. During this critical period, he says, his sister Dorothy's influence kept alive the poet in him, by directing his mind toward the sources of permanent strength and joy which lie in nature and in human sympathy:

> She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
> And humble cares, and delicate fears;
> A heart, the fountain of sweet tears,
> And love, and thought, and joy.

Their residence at Alfoxden, with Coleridge, 1797–1798, marks the true beginning of Wordsworth's poetic career;

for up to this time, though he had written much, he had not found his genuine matter and manner. In "We are Seven," "Expostulation and Reply," "Lines in Early Spring," "Tintern Abbey," and other pieces written at this time, the true Wordsworth is apparent. During the winter in Germany which followed, he added to these pieces some of his most characteristic poems, such as "She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways" and "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower." On his return he settled with his sister in a cottage at Grasmere, on Lake Grasmere, and in 1802 he married. At Grasmere, and afterward at Rydal Mount near the head of Windermere, he lived for fifty years among the Cumberland dalesmen, leading an existence as pastoral and as frugal as theirs, reading little and meditating much, looking with deep, unwearied delight upon the mountains and skies and waters which had fascinated him in boyhood. A small legacy from a friend, and later an appointment as distributor of stamps, made him independent, and left virtually his whole time free for the pursuit of poetry, which was for him, as for Milton, not only an art but a solemn ministry. The heights of his poetic achievement are marked successively by such pieces as "Michael" (1800); "The Leech-Gatherer," the sonnets to Milton, to Toussaint L'Ouverture, "It Is a Beauteous Evening" and "Westminster Bridge" (1802); "The Solitary Reaper" and "Yarrow Unvisited" (1803); the "Ode to Duty," "To a Skylark," and *The Prelude* (1805); "The World Is Too Much With Us" and "The Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" (1806); "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle" (1807), and *The Excursion* (1814). After this last date Wordsworth's genius gradually stiffened, and he produced little more poetry of the first order. This decline in poetic power in his later years was accompanied by a reaction from the social and political radicalism of his youth into a firm conservatism,

which led him to uphold existing institutions of church and state in the spirit of Burke. For many years his poetry met with neglect and ridicule, but he gradually drew to himself the attention and veneration of the best minds. The crowd turned aside to follow first Scott, then Byron, and then Tennyson; but those whose suffrages were of most value rallied in increasing numbers about the "good old steel-gray figure" of the Cumberland poet; and before his death in 1850 he enjoyed a late but sure renown.

His Nature-Poetry: Its Sensitiveness.

In Wordsworth the growing sensibility to natural phenomena, which we have traced from Thomson and Collins down to the end of the eighteenth century, reached its height. He was gifted by nature with an eye and an ear marvellously sensitive to those slight and elusive impressions which most persons pass by without noticing at all. This sensibility was increased by a long life spent in the country, in a region full of charm and even of grandeur; and it was made efficacious by a remarkable serenity and patience, which enabled him to gather all the riches of the inanimate world, without haste and without disturbing excitement. Hence his poetry is full of exquisitely noted sights and sounds—the shadow of the daisy on the stone, the mist which follows the hare as she runs across a rain-drenched moor, the echo of the cuckoo's voice, the varying noise of waters, and the many voices of the wind. "To read one of his longer pastoral poems for the first time," it has been said, "is like a day spent in a new country." And all these sights and sounds are given with absolute truthfulness to the fact. There is no effect of heightening nature, of seeing her clothed in a light brighter or stranger than her own. Wordsworth writes "with his eye on the object," content to portray what he sees. He learned from Burns that "verse can build a princely throne on humble truth";

Its Truth.

and everywhere he gives an impression of unquestioning, reverent faithfulness to the fact which his senses have perceived. It follows that the greater part of his nature-studies are in a low key; in the rareness of their grandeurs and glories, they breathe the modesty of nature. Especially noteworthy is the predominance in Wordsworth of broad elementary impressions —mere darkness and light, the silence of the sky, the moon "looking round her when the heavens are bare," the twilight with its one star, the breathlessness of the evening sea, the lonesomeness of upland fields, the "sleep that is among the lonely hills." It is the keenness of Wordsworth's sensibility to nature, and his quiet, religious acceptance of her as she is, and his unwearied delight in her broadest and simplest phases, which together make him the first of her poets.

Its Breadth.

This same sobriety and truth of tone, this same reverent regard for the great commonplaces of life, characterize also Wordsworth's treatment of human nature. He deals with the broad elementary passions, the every-day affections, occupations, and duties, in a state of society where man is simplest and nearest to the soil. In many of his best poems, indeed, the human beings whom he pictures seem almost a part of the landscape, an emanation from nature herself, like the trees or the rocks. The figure of the leech-gatherer on the moor seems as much a part of the natural landscape as the pool by which he stands; the woman who speaks to the poet in "Stepping Westward" seems a part of the sunset, so blended is she with the scene; in "The Highland Reaper" the singing of the girl comes out of the heart of the day, like the spirit of ancestral Scotland telling over its "old unhappy far-off things, and battles long ago"; she is hardly more of a human personality than the cuckoo or the nightingale to which the poet compares her voice. Even when he

His Treatment of Human Nature.

looks closer at his human characters, and shows us their passions and the accidents of their life, they still partake of the simplicity and breadth of external nature, reminding us of the characters of Bible story or of the simple, tragic figures of the French peasant painter Millet. The story of Margaret, in the first book of *The Excursion*, illustrates this, as does in a still better way "Michael," the greatest example of Wordsworth's power to give to the simple tragedies of the peasant world a monumental impressiveness. He is the poet of human life in its lowest terms, of that joy and sorrow which is "in widest commonalty spread." He looks to find the true significance of life on its lower levels, as did Crabbe; but with far more sympathy, depth, and spiritual glow than Crabbe was able to bring to bear upon his subject. The best praise he can give his own wife is that she is a "being breathing thoughtful breath," in whose countenance meet sweet household records and promises. For Milton his best praise is that, although his "soul was like a star and dwelt apart," yet it laid upon itself "the lowliest duties" along "life's common way." With Wordsworth the doctrine of simplicity was a thoroughgoing one, and entered into his entire conception not only of art but of life.

His Mysticism.

Yet we should have but a very partial understanding of Wordsworth's personality and of his poetic meaning if we stopped here. There was in him, besides the realist and the moralist, the mystic. Nature is for him, even when he portrays her external aspect with the most naked truth, never merely a physical fact; nor has man, even when most blended in with her external features, merely a physical relation to her. On the contrary, nature is everywhere mystically transfused with spirit, and speaks mystically to the spirit in man, working upon him by the power of kinship and mutual understanding. Perhaps the most complete expression of this aspect of his thought is "Tintern Abbey,"

which appeared in the *Lyrical Ballads*. "Tintern Abbey" was written during a walking tour which Wordsworth took in 1798, in company with his sister, through a country familiar to him in earlier years. The well-remembered scenery of the River Wye calls up before his musing thought the picture of his boyhood, with its passionate absorption in nature, when "the sounding cataract haunted him like a passion," and the rocks, the mountains, and the woods were to him "an appetite." He shows how the influences of nature, acting upon the plastic soul of youth, bear fruit in later life, in "sensations sweet felt in the blood and felt along the heart," and "little nameless unremembered acts of kindness and of love"; and how they lift the spirit which remembers them, to

"Tintern Abbey."

> that blessed mood
> In which the burden of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world
> Is lightened . . .
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.

And he suggests a metaphysical explanation for this strange power which nature has to soothe and ennoble the human soul, namely, that throughout nature there is diffused the active spirit of God, living and working in her:

> I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
> And rolls through all things.

"Tintern Abbey" gives us almost a complete "programme" of Wordsworth's poetic career. In it we see marked out clearly the main paths which his mind followed during a long lifetime of lonely contemplation. In many noble poems he developed the three themes here given out: the eternal beauty of nature, which waits everywhere about us "to haunt, to startle, and waylay"; the power of that beauty to heal, gladden, and fortify whoever gives it welcome; and the mystic source of this power, the spirit of God, hidden yet apparent in all the visible creation, building for itself a "metropolitan temple in the hearts" of simple and unselfish men. Perhaps the most exquisite expression he has given to the idea of nature's formative power upon the soul, and through the soul upon the body of man, is the poem beginning "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower."

His "Metaphysical Imagination."

The instinct to perceive nature and human life in transcendental terms was very early manifested in Wordsworth. In his school-days at Hawkshead the world would sometimes, he tells us, seem suddenly to dissolve, and he would fall into an abyss of idealism from which he had to bring himself back to reality by grasping at the wall by the roadside, or by stooping to pick up a stone. This habit of mind, sobered and strengthened by reflection, pervades all his poetry, and gives to it a peculiarly stimulating character. In reading him, we never know when the actual landscape and the simple human story will widen out suddenly into some vaster theme, looking beyond space and time; so that he awakens in us a kind of spiritual apprehension or expectancy which forces us to look below the surface of his simplest poem, and to be on the alert for a meaning deeper than its primary one. The "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" is the poem in which the speculation is boldest. In this ode, which Em-

"Intimations of Immortality."

erson called "the high-water mark of poetry in the nineteenth century," the poet looks back with passionate regret to the lost radiance of his childhood, and tries to connect childhood reassuringly not only with manhood and old age, but also with a previous existence, whence it brings its light of innocence and joy. The poem is a product of that majestic kind of metaphysical imagination which transcends space and time, and makes

> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the eternal silence.

In the "Intimations" and other poems mystically conceived, Wordsworth took the inheritance of the seventeenth-century mystics, and of Blake, and gave it a clearer development, just as in his naturalistic poetry he carried to large issues the work of Cowper, Crabbe, and Burns.

Wordsworth's Style.

Wordsworth's position and influence are due partly to the fact that he greatly enlarged the boundaries of poetry, giving it, as subject-matter, themes varying from the joys and sorrows of simple, homely lives, to the transcendental interests of the soul in communion with nature and God; partly to his development of a poetic style befitting such material. His first youthful verse was written after the manner of Pope, in heroic couplet and in the artificial language current in the eighteenth century. But in *Lyrical Ballads* he made a conscious change, which he explained in the preface to the second edition in 1800. The effort in Wordsworth's contributions to the volume was to treat incidents from common life, and to relate them in language really used by men. He took as much pains to avoid poetic diction as was ordinarily taken to employ it, and relied for imaginative coloring on the passion which men would express in the situations which he selected, and which would give to their language dignity, variety, and metaphor. Clearly, much depended

on the poet's choice of the situation to be treated, and Wordsworth was not uniformly happy in his selection. Common frequently remained commonplace, and his language, in consequence, did not rise above sheer prose. Again, his lack of humor sometimes led him, as in "The Idiot Boy," into manifest absurdity. In portraying his own life and thought he fell into the same confusion, owing to his inability to distinguish between the supreme and the commonplace, and accordingly he wrote in two styles, one inspired, the other pedestrian. His mind was, in ordinary moods, matter-of-fact, and it worked slowly and stiffly. But just in proportion to the amount of spiritual energy required to fuse this reluctant metal of his mind into a plastic and glowing state, is the beauty and permanency of the product of his highest creative moments; so that his finest poems seem as little subject to the touch of time, as immune from decay, as the mountains or the stars.

Robert Southey.

It has long been traditional to associate with Wordsworth and Coleridge, in the triad of "Lake Poets," the name of Robert Southey (1774–1843), Coleridge's brother-in-law and colleague in the scheme of pantisocracy. Southey felt the impulse of escape from the present world into the regions of the past and the distant, especially the Orient, but with him this impulse was nourished rather by reading and study than by inward experience. He settled in the Lake country in 1803, and there gave himself largely to study and industrious writing of prose as well as poetry, for he had Coleridge's family to support in part, as well as his own. His romanticism found expression in long poems, *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), based on Mohammedan legend, and *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), on Hindu mythology. He is best remembered for his ballads in modern form, "The Inchcape Rock," "The Crocodile King," and "Bishop Hatto," and for his admirable biog-

raphies of Nelson, John Wesley, and John Bunyan. He, like Wordsworth and Coleridge, shared in the political idealism of the early days of the French Revolution, and like them came to distrust popular government and became a strenuous defender of the institutions of the past. Although one of the Lake Poets, he holds his place less by poetic quality than by personal association.

Main Lines of Romantic Revolt Summarized.

We have seen how the revolt against eighteenth-century actuality and "common sense" found expression in the wild phantasmagories of Blake, and in the strange dream-world of Coleridge. We have seen likewise how the reaction from the rigid social aristocracy of the eighteenth century, and from its contempt for the lowly aspects of human existence, led, through the harsh realism of Crabbe, to Burns's passionate vindication of the primary instincts, and to Wordsworth's solemn revealment of the majesty of simple lives. We have seen, too, how the protest against eighteenth-century "urbanity" and absorption in the life of the town led, through Cowper's mild delight in rural things, to the piercing tenderness of Burns's "Mountain Daisy," and to the mystical insight of Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey." In like manner, the revulsion from the Augustan indifference to the Middle Ages led, through the forgeries of Chatterton and the epic chants of the pseudo-Ossian, to Scott, for whom it was reserved to create the life of the past on a vast scale, and with an unparalleled illusion of truth.

Scott's Career as a Poet.

Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771; his father was a lawyer, but was descended from a vigorous and warlike border clan. Scott developed early a passion for the ballad minstrelsy of his land; and he spent many days of his youth roaming over the country, gathering ballads and scraps of ballads from the lips of peasants. His collection was published as *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*

in 1802. Except for a few ballads in the "grewsome" vein made popular by the "Lenore" of Bürger, the pioneer of German romanticism, Scott wrote no original poetry until his thirty-fourth year. In 1805 appeared *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, in which a thread of gothic supernaturalism is woven into a tale of Scotch border life in the Middle Ages. This was followed in 1808 by *Marmion*. *Marmion* exhibited in much greater measure the brilliant descriptive color, the swift and powerful narrative movement, and the ringing, energetic music, which had made the *Lay* instantly popular; and it showed a great advance over the earlier poem in lifelikeness and breadth. Scarcely more than a year later appeared *The Lady of the Lake*, a story softer and more idyllic than *Marmion*, yet not lacking in wild and stirring episodes; in it Scott came far nearer than he had done in his earlier poems to the broad, imaginative handling of mediæval Scotch life which he afterward gave in his prose romances.

Qualities of His Poetry.

These three poems, presenting many of the new romantic motives in popularly attractive form, took the reading world by storm. The diction employed in them was not, like the language of Coleridge and Wordsworth, so startlingly novel as a literary medium that it repelled the unaccustomed ear. The metre was strong and buoyant, appealing powerfully to a public weary of the monotonous couplets of the preceding age, but unable to appreciate the delicate melodies of the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and the *Lyrical Ballads*. The romantic scenery, brightly and firmly painted, but always kept subordinate to the action; the character delineation, picturesque but not subtle; and the vigorous sweep of the story—all appealed to the popular heart. Scott himself described the peculiar excellence of his poetry truly enough, though with characteristic modesty, as consisting in a "hurried

frankness of composition which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition."

Scott's metrical tales did much to popularize romanticism in its broader phases. He was, however, not much in earnest as a poet; and when the public turned to the more lurid and extravagant verse-tales of Byron, Scott cheerfully resigned his place to the younger man, and began his far greater work in prose (see page 395).

The popular triumph of romanticism was also aided by another Scotch poet, Thomas Campbell (1777–1844).

Thomas Campbell.

He began his career as a follower of the Augustans, and was known during his university career as the "Pope of Glasgow." In Germany, where he went in 1799, he fell under the influence of Bürger and the other early German romanticists, and in 1803 he published a volume of poems in the new manner, among which "Lochiel," "Hohenlinden," and "The Exile of Erin" attained and have held a great popular esteem. Afterward he published his famous war-odes, "The Battle of the Baltic" and "Ye Mariners of England." These splendid battle-chants, full of martial energy and kindling enthusiasm, rank with the best war-poetry of England, and are worthy of the race which holds the dominion of the sea.

The group of poets who came to manhood when the French Revolution was at its height reacted during the

Conservatism of Scott and the Lake Poets.

Napoleonic wars into settled conservatism. Scott, indeed, by the accident of his early surroundings, was conservative from the first. Southey and Coleridge, after their youthful enthusiasm for a new utopian scheme of society, took refuge, the one in political Toryism, the other in the mystical pedantries of German philosophy. Wordsworth, who had felt the storm and stress of revolutionary ideas more than any of the others, after a long period of wavering and disappointment, finally intrenched himself

behind the institutions of church and state as he found them. The two poets whom we now approach, Byron and Shelley, took up the torch of revolution which had been kindled in France during their childhood, and carried it flaming into new regions of thought and feeling.

Radicalism of Byron and Shelley.

George Gordon, Lord Byron, was born in 1788, of a family of noblemen notorious for their passionate temper, their adventures, and their unsocial conduct. He was of extraordinary physical beauty, and a lameness of one foot added to this a touch of pathos. Personal fascination was his from the first. He mastered his little world of school-fellows at Harrow with the same enthralling power of personality which later took captive the imagination of Europe. His first volume of poems, *Hours of Idleness* (1807), an immature little book, was mercilessly ridiculed in the *Edinburgh Review*. Byron nursed his revenge, and in 1809 he published a vigorous onslaught upon his critics, entitled *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. This poem is written in the manner of Pope, for whom Byron always professed admiration, and is not unworthy of his school, either in mastery of the heroic couplet or in energy of satire. It is significant that Byron's first signal performance should have been conceived in a satiric vein, and educed by a blow to his personal pride.

Byron's Life and Writings.

Two years later the young poet set off upon his travels, which he sketched in the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* (1812). Not content with the conventional "grand tour," he pushed on into Albania, Greece, and the islands of the Ægean; dining in the tents of robber chieftains, rescuing distressed beauties from death at the hand of harem slaves, and doing many other romantic things. The public, at any rate, was eager to ascribe all these adventures to him, incited thereto by the lurid verse-romances, *The Giaour* (1813), *The Corsair* (1814), *Lara*

(1814), and others, which he now poured out with prodigal swiftness. These eastern tales were crude and melodramatic, but they appealed enormously to the popular taste, and quite eclipsed Scott's saner and healthier muse.

Byron's return to England and his marriage were quickly followed by a separation from his wife and by his final departure from his native country. The next years he spent in Switzerland and Italy, part of the time in company with Shelley. To this period belong his most important works, the later cantos of *Childe Harold* (1816–1818), the dramas *Manfred* (1817) and *Cain* (1821), and his satiric masterpiece, *Don Juan* (1819–1824). The romance of his life was crowned by a romantic and generous death. In 1824 he went to Greece, to put himself at the head of the revolutionary forces gathered to liberate that country from the tyranny of the Sultan. He was seized with fever in the swamps of Missolonghi, and died before he had had time to prove his ability as a leader.

The Eastern Tales.

In his eastern tales and his dramas Byron presents under many names one hero—himself, or rather an exaggerated shadow of one side of himself. The Conrads and Laras of the tales are all proud and lonely souls in revolt; mysteriously wicked, infernally proud, quixotically generous, and above all melancholy. They all represent the individual in revolt against society. In *Manfred* and *Cain* these crude outlines became imposing silhouettes, thrown out sharply against a background half-real and half-supernatural. The scene of *Manfred* is laid in the high Alps, where the hero lives in his castle in gloomy and bitter isolation, communing with unearthly powers, and scornfully working out his dark fate.

The Dramas: Reasons for Their Popularity.

Cain, though imperfectly carried out, is superbly conceived. The earthly rebel and first shedder of human blood, under the guidance of Lucifer, the rebel angel, visits hell and chaos, and there finds grounds

for the godless hatred that is in him. It was by these plays, from one point of view truly terrible, that Byron earned his title as founder and chief exemplar of the "Satanic school" of poetry. They are perhaps the most uncompromising expression of individualism, and the most thoroughgoing negation of the social ideal to be found in our literature. Their popularity, which was instant and enormous throughout Europe, was largely due to historical causes. The French Revolution, the most daring reach which the human race has ever made after an ideal social state, had failed. Europe, under the rule of the monarchs who had overthrown Napoleon, had swung back from its eager dreams of freedom and fraternity into a gloomy mood, in which the still potent spirit of rebellion became personal, self-centred, and anti-social. Byron represented and justified to the European mind this recoil, and Byronism became a passion, a disease.

Childe Harold presents the Byronic hero in a more elegiac mood, as a pensive wanderer through Europe and the East. It is not until the later cantos that the verse rises into real magnificence. Among the lakes and mountain solitudes of Switzerland, the decaying glories of Venice, and the imperial ruins of Rome, the poet's imagination is genuinely kindled, and the passages which celebrate these scenes are among the triumphs of descriptive poetry in our language. Byron paints his pictures in free, bold strokes, and with a pomp of rhetoric well suited to his grandiose subjects. He makes up in broad impressiveness what he lacks in subtlety. His music, too, is loud and sonorous; without the heartfelt, searching beauty of greater melodists, but with an orchestral sweep and volume appropriate to the theme.

Byron as a Descriptive Poet: "Childe Harold."

In *Don Juan* Byron wrote his masterpiece, and it proved to be neither dramatic nor lyric, but satiric.

Don Juan is a comprehensive satire upon modern society. The hero is a Castilian youth, a light-hearted, irresponsible pagan creature, who wanders through Turkey, Russia, and England, meeting all sorts of adventures, particularly such as are calculated to shock the moral sense, and to exhibit the social corruption hidden under the conventional veneer. The poem is, in effect, a long peal of scornful laughter flung at British cant, at that famous British cant which Byron declared was in his day the "primum mobile" of his countrymen's life, both national and private. In his more serious work Byron is fatally subject to anticlimax. His imagination and his power of phrase are apt to fail him just when they are needed most. In *Don Juan* he turns this defect into a piquant virtue, by deliberately cultivating anticlimax for satiric ends. He drops with startling suddenness from the serious to the trivial, from impassioned poetry to mocking prose. The device is a simple one, but Byron uses it with a variety and zest truly wonderful, and secures by means of it an effect of cynical nonchalance which is a triumph of its kind.

Byron as a Satirist: "Don Juan."

Byron's was a personality of immense force. To his age he was a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, but one which led only into deeper deserts of unfaith and negation. Such work as he had to do was a work of destruction; the age cried out for it, and he did it thoroughly. Of the higher powers of poetry he possessed few, and for them he cared little. He was a careless and hasty worker. In his own words, if he missed his first spring he went growling back to his jungle. That he was a great writer, one of the greatest, is as certain as that neither by the soul nor the body of his art can he take rank with the small company of supreme poets.

Byron's Influence and Style.

Among that company, a presence so bright and strange

as to seem in truth one of those "spirits from beyond the moon" of which he sang, Percy Bysshe Shelley holds a place. He was born in 1792, just when the eyes of all Europe were fixed in hope and fear upon France, and the stars fought in their courses for the triumph of a new order.

Shelley's Life and Poetic Development.

At Eton, among the tyrannies and conventions of a great public school, his sensitive nature was thrown into a fever of rebellion from which he never quite worked out into spiritual sanity and health. "Mad Shelley" his schoolmates called him, and in the judgment of the world he remained "Mad Shelley" to the end of his life. At Oxford, whither he proceeded in 1810, he read the sceptical French philosophers, and deemed it his duty to publish his religious views in a pamphlet entitled "The Necessity of Atheism," for which he was expelled. An ill-starred marriage with Harriet Westbrook followed, and after that came a quixotic attempt to arouse Ireland to seek redress for her national wrongs. The young couple carried on their mission by throwing from the windows of their lodging in Dublin copies of Shelley's *Address to the Irish People*, "to every passer-by who seemed likely." They continued the campaign later in Wales, by setting tracts adrift in the sea in sealed bottles, or sending them down the wind in little fire-balloons. The curious mixture in Shelley of the real and the unreal is sharply brought out by the fact that the writings thus fantastically put in circulation are often of grave and simple eloquence, wise in counsel and temperate in tone, and that most of the reforms which they advocate have since been enacted into law.

An acquaintance with William Godwin, the revolutionary philosopher and novelist, author of *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams*, led Shelley to write *Queen Mab*, a crude poem attacking dogmatic religion, government, industrial tyranny, and war. He separated from Harriet

Westbrook in 1814, and united himself with Godwin's daughter, Mary, who after Harriet's suicide became his wife. His next poem, *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude* (1816), shows his aerial genius abandoning the earth in a spiritual intoxication of dream and fancy. This was followed in 1818 by *Laon and Cythna*, which was at once suppressed and published later as *The Revolt of Islam*, a long narrative in Spenserian stanza of passion and of social revolution. In 1818 the Shelleys went to Italy, where his powers developed rapidly. At Rome, amid the tangle of flowers and vines which at that time covered the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, he wrote his lyrical drama, *Prometheus Unbound*. The same year (1819) he finished *The Cenci*, a drama intended for the stage, and written in much more simple and every-day language than his other works. The short remainder of his life is marked by many great poems, some of considerable length, like the "Sensitive Plant" and "Adonais"; others shorter, among them the wonderful "Ode to the West Wind," and the best known of all Shelley's lyrics, the "Skylark." In 1822 the poet was drowned, while sailing off Leghorn, in one of those swift storms which sweep the Mediterranean during the summer heats. His body was burned on the beach, and his ashes were placed in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, near the grave where, a few months before, Keats had been laid.

Shelley's most characteristic work, both in thought and style, is *Prometheus Unbound*. The subject was suggested by a lost drama of Æschylus, in which Prometheus, the heroic friend and lover of mankind, was unchained from a bleak precipice where the tyrant Zeus had hung him. In Shelley's treatment Prometheus represents, not a superhuman helper of mankind, but Mankind itself, heroic, just, gentle, sacredly thirsting after liberty and spiritual gladness, but chained and tortured by the ruler

His Most Characteristic Work, "Prometheus Unbound."

of Heaven. In the fulness of time Demogorgon (Necessity) hurls the tyrant from his throne; and Prometheus, amid the songs of Earth and the Moon, is united to Asia, the spirit of love in nature. Here, as elsewhere, Shelley shows himself a child of the French Revolution, in believing that it is only some external tyranny—the might of priests and kings, the weight of "custom," the dark creed of superstition—which keeps mankind from rising to his ideal stature. But if the philosophy of *Prometheus* is immature and tinged with the popular misconceptions of the time, the nobility of its mood, the heroic enthusiasm which it voices, make it eternally inspiring. And for its spirit of sacred passion the verse of the poem is a glorious vesture. The unearthly beauty of its imagery, the keen ethereal music of its songs and choruses, make this not only Shelley's highest achievement, but a fixed star in the firmament of poetry.

His Lyrical Genius.

It is in its lyrics that *Prometheus* reaches its greatest altitudes, for Shelley's genius was essentially lyrical. In all his best songs and odes the words seem to be moved into their places in response to some hidden tune, wayward and strange in its movement, but always rounding into a perfect whole. Such a poem as that beginning "Swiftly walk over the western wave" marks perhaps the extreme limit of the romantic divergence from eighteenth-century strictness of form; but it obeys a higher law than that of regularity, and with all its waywardness it is as perfect in shape as a flower. The rhythmical structure of the "West Wind" should be studied as a typical example of Shelley's power to make the movement of verse embody its mood. In this ode, the impetuous sweep and tireless overflow of the *terza rima*,[1] ending after each twelfth line in a couplet, suggest with wonderful truth the streaming and volleying of the wind, interrupted now and then by a

[1] Ten-syllable lines rhyming *a b a, b c b, c d c*, etc.

sudden lull. Likewise in the "Skylark," the fluttering lift of the bird's movement, the airy ecstasy and rippling gush of its song, are mirrored in the rhythm in a thousand subtly varying effects.

His "Myth-making" Power.

Another main peculiarity of Shelley as a poet is what may be called his "myth-making" power. His poetry is full of "personifications" which, although in origin not different from those which fill eighteenth-century poetry with dead abstractions like "smiling Hope" and "ruddy Cheer," are imagined with such power that they become real spiritual presences, inspiring wonder and awe. Such are the "Spirits of the Hours" in *Prometheus*, such is the spirit of the west wind in the ode just mentioned, the latter a sublime piece of myth-making. It is in "Adonais," however, that this quality is perhaps best exhibited. To mourn over the dead body of Keats, in whose memory the elegy was written, there gather Splendors and Glooms, grief-clad Morning and wailing Spring, desolate Hours, winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies, and the lovely dreams which were the exhalation of the poet's spirit, in life. It would be hard to find a more signal instance than these "personifications" afford, of the way in which a great poet can revivify an outworn and discredited poetic tradition. The elegy is of all Shelley's poems the one which would most have satisfied Keats's own jealous artistic sense. It is to be grouped with Milton's *Lycidas*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and Arnold's *Thyrsis* as one of the four supreme threnodies[1] in English verse.

Shelley deals less with actualities than does any other English poet. His imagery is that of a dream-world, peopled by ethereal forms and bathed in prismatic light. Even when he borrows imagery from nature,

[1] Threnody, from two Greek words signifying "tear" and "song," *i. e.*, a song of grief for the dead.

it is from a nature heightened and rarefied by passage through his own temperament. He is at the other pole from Wordsworth's homeliness and large acceptance of nature as she is. Hence an air of unreality rests over all Shelley's work, an unreality made more conspicuous by his unpractical theories of conduct and of society. Matthew Arnold called him "a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." But beauty such as Shelley's verse embodies cannot be ineffectual; and his passionate plea for freedom, for justice, and for loving-kindness has never ceased to be potent in the deepening earnestness of this century's search after social betterment.

His "Unreality."

One effect of the revolutionary excitement of the age, and of the political agitation which it engendered, was to revive the sentiment of nationality, which had lost during the eighteenth century the lyric ardor given to it during the reign of Elizabeth. In Wordsworth's sonnets on national crises during the Napoleonic wars, and in Campbell's odes, this new national sentiment was expressed for England. In Scott's poems and novels it was expressed —in a broader, less political way—for Scotland. Ireland found a champion for her immemorial wrongs, and a reflection of her national peculiarities of temperament, in Thomas Moore (1779–1852), the biographer and intimate friend of Byron. Moore's *Irish Melodies*, of which, beginning in 1807, he wrote an immense number, include a score or so really beautiful lyrics, where the bright fancy and vague, elusive melancholy of the Celtic nature find fit expression. Like the Elizabethan lyrist, Moore wrote for music, much of it of his own composing. He shows the insincere use of romanticism as a literary fashion in his oriental tale, *Lalla Rookh* (1817), which is as artificial in its candied

Revival of National Sentiment.

Thomas Moore.

sweetness and tinsel decoration as the Irish Melodies are, when at their best, genuine.

A link between the revolutionary poets, deeply imbued with the agitation of their time, and Keats, in whose work the "time-spirit" counts for almost nothing, is furnished by Leigh Hunt (1784–1859). He was intimate with both Byron and Shelley, and shared their radicalism. In 1812 he was imprisoned for criticising the Prince Regent; and during his imprisonment he made an exhaustive study of the Italian poets, especially Ariosto; the chief fruit of this study in his own work was a narrative poem entitled "Francesca da Rimini," suggested by Dante's account of the lovers Paolo and Francesca, in his *Inferno*. Hunt wrote a vast amount of critical and miscellaneous prose, among which his essays upon actors and acting are of especial interest. At least one of his shorter poems, "Abou Ben Adhem," has remained popular.

Leigh Hunt.

It was through Leigh Hunt that Keats, his friend and for a time his disciple, was led to the study of the Italians, from whom he derived, as Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton had done before him, a richness of tone and a glow of color that he could hardly otherwise have attained. The Romantic Movement has been called a "second Renaissance"; and it is a striking fact that the two great sources of literary inspiration in the Renaissance, classical and Italian poetry, furnished to the later group of romantic poets invaluable aid. Byron and Shelley did their best work under Italian stimulus, supplemented in Shelley's case by the influence of Plato and the Greek dramatists. Keats formed his manner in the first place upon the Italian poets, and upon their greatest English imitator, Spenser; and in the old Greek myths he found the chief food for his imagination. Later he supplemented his training with a study of the Elizabethan dramatists

Romantic Movement a "Second Renaissance."

and of Milton, in all of whom the Italian element is strong.

Keats: His Life and Poetic Development.

John Keats was born in 1795, the son of a livery-stable keeper. He was apprenticed at fifteen to learn surgery, but he broke his indentures, and after walking the hospitals in London for a time, he gave up the medical profession. The passion for poetry, which was to be, during the brief remainder of his life, a consuming ardor, had already been kindled in him. Leigh Hunt introduced him to a literary circle where his dawning talents found encouragement. In 1817 he published a little volume of verse, most of it crude and immature enough, but containing the magnificent sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," which reveals one source of his inspiration. From the first his imagination had turned to the old Greek world with instinctive sympathy; and he now chose as the subject for a long narrative poem the story of Endymion, the Latmian shepherd beloved by the moon-goddess. *Endymion* was published in 1818. The exordium of the poem, the Hymn to Pan in the opening episode, and a myriad other lines and short passages, are worthy of the Keats that was to be; but as a whole *Endymion* is chaotic, and cloyed with ornament. Nobody knew this better than Keats himself, as is indicated both by his letters and by the proudly humble preface in which he describes the poem as a "feverish attempt rather than a deed accomplished," and hopes that "while it is dwindling I may be plotting and fitting myself for verses fit to live."

To what purpose he plotted, the wonderful volume published two years later, in 1820, shows. It was entitled *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems;* besides the pieces named, it contained the great odes, "On Melancholy," "On a Grecian Urn," "To Psyche," and "To a Nightingale," and the heroic fragment, "Hy-

perion." Two years had done wonders in deepening and strengthening his gift. In turning from Spenser and Ariosto to the great masculine poets of the seventeenth century, Shakespeare, Webster, Milton, and Dryden, he had found the iron which was lacking in his earlier intellectual food, and had learned the lessons of artistic calmness and severity, without sacrifice of the mellow sweetness native to him; to charm he had added strength.

Before the 1820 volume was published, Keats was attacked by consumption, and had warning that another winter in England would prove fatal. In September of that year he sailed for Italy under the care of his faithful friend, Joseph Severn. Early in the spring of 1821 he died in Rome, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery by the Aurelian wall, where Shelley, also, was soon to be laid. On his tomb are carved, according to his own request, the words: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." In a hopefuller time and in a mood of noble simplicity, he had said: "I think I shall be among the English poets after my death."

His Worship of Beauty.

The essential quality of Keats as a poet is his sensitiveness to beauty, and the singleness of aim with which he seeks for "the principle of beauty in all things." He worships beauty for beauty's sake, with none of the secondary moral intentions of Milton, Wordsworth, and Shelley, but with the unreasoning rapture of a lover or a devotee. In his first volume he tells of the "dizzy pain" which the sight of the Elgin marbles gave him, of the "indescribable feud" which they "brought round his heart." He opens his second volume with the memorable line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever"; and in his last volume, at the close of the ode "On a Grecian Urn," he declares that beauty is one with truth. In this last instance he attempts for once to rationalize his instinctive devotion; but it is as an overmastering instinct, not as a philosophic

conception, that we find the worship of beauty everywhere operative in his work.

Qualities of His Poetry.

It is this passion for beauty, working through an æsthetic organism of extraordinary delicacy and power, which gives to Keats's poetry its sensuous richness, and which makes it play magically upon all the senses of the reader. The pure glow of his color reminds us of the Italian painter Giorgione; and the music of his best verse has a wonderful mellowness and depth, as if blown softly through golden trumpets. In the early poems the richness is indeed too great, the ornament excessive; but this is merely the eager lavishness of youth rejoicing in its abundance, and not yet disciplined into good taste. From the first his poetry has extraordinary freshness, energy, gusto. His use of words is, even in his earliest volume, wonderfully fresh. He revived old words, coined new ones, and put current ones to a new service, with a confidence and success unequalled by any other English poets except Chaucer, Shakespeare, and perhaps Spenser.

His Sense of Form.

The sense of form, which is so conspicuous in Keats's later work, was a matter of growth with him. *Endymion* is formless, a labyrinth of flowery paths which lead nowhere. But the great odes, especially the "Nightingale" and the "Grecian Urn," and the later narrative poems, "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "Lamia," have a wonderful perfection of form, a subordination of part to part in the building up of a beautiful whole, which is the sign of the master workman. This is particularly true of "The Eve of St. Agnes," that latest and perhaps most perfect flowering of the old Spenserian tree. The story of Madeline's dream on the haunted eve, of its magical fulfilment through young Porphyro's coming, and of their flight from the castle, is set in a framework of storm and cold, of dreary penance and spectral old age, of barbarous revelry and rude primeval

passion, which by a series of subtle and thrilling contrasts marvellously heightens the warm and tender radiance of the central picture; then, when the illusion of reality is at the height, the whole thing is thrown back into the dim and doubtful past by the words

> And they are gone; ay, ages long ago
> These lovers fled away into the storm.

"Hyperion."

Keats's strength, which we see in "The Eve of St. Agnes," "Lamia," and the Odes, working in the service of perfect grace, tempted him in "Hyperion" to attack a theme of the largest epic dimensions, the overthrow of the old Titan sun-deity Hyperion by the new sun-god Apollo. The subject proved too large for his undeveloped powers, and he threw it aside, on the ground that there were "too many Miltonic inversions in it." Probably the deeper reason was that he felt as yet unequal to the task of imposing form upon his stupendous matter, and his artistic sense would no longer permit him to be content with formlessness. As the poem stands it is a superb fragment, an august portal to a temple which will never be built.

His Humanity.

Although the body of Keats's work lies remote from every-day human interest, it is a serious mistake to think of him as indifferent to human affairs, or in any sense effeminate. His wonderful letters, with their rollicking fun, their quick human sympathy and solicitude, their eager ponderings upon life and clear insight into many of its dark places, show a nature vitalized at every point, and keenly alert to reality. Through many of his later poems, especially the great odes, breathes a poignant human undertone, which suggests that if he had lived he might have turned more and more to themes of common human experience. Dying as he did at twenty-five, after only three or four years

of opportunity, he yet left behind him a body of poetry which is in its kind unexcelled.

From the youthful work of Tennyson and Browning down to the present day, the poetry of the Victorian age has been deeply affected in form and color by Keats's fascinating example. His importance in the romantic development which we have been tracing is twofold. In the first place, no one in the line of his predecessors had been endowed as was he to taste of all earthly delights, to "burst joy's grape against his palate fine," and to convey into verse the wealth of his sensations. By describing life as it came to him, through his temperament, a temperament most rich and delicate, yet most robust, he greatly widened the sensuous realm of poetry. In the second place, he greatly enriched the texture of verse—its diction and melody—by importing into it new elements from Italian and Elizabethan poetry. In reclaiming the lost secrets of Renaissance verse, he did consummately what Thomson, Collins, Gray, and Blake had done falteringly.

His Place in the Romantic Movement.

II

The great development of poetry in these early years of the century was accompanied by an equally important movement in criticism. There had been great critics from the time of Elizabeth —Ben Jonson, Dryden, Samuel Johnson—but they had made their authority felt in personal intercourse, or in occasional publications, such as Dryden's prefaces, or Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. The reviews and magazines were largely controlled by publishers, who employed hack writers to puff their wares and disparage those of others. The first great modern magazine to be established was the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802, of which Francis Jeffrey (1773–1850) soon became editor-in-chief. He and his coeditors insisted on entire freedom from publishers' influ-

The Critical Magazines.

ence, though political prejudice often colored their criticism. Jeffrey and his friends were Whigs; to offset the power which the rapid success of the *Edinburgh* gave them, the Tories established *The Quarterly Review* in 1809, to which Southey was for long a chief contributor. In 1817 was founded *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, which was also Tory in politics, but more vivacious and less responsible than its contemporaries. For many years John Wilson (who wrote over the name Christopher North) was the leading spirit of *Blackwood's*, contributing to it the famous series of conversations which he called *Noctes Ambrosianæ*.

Francis Jeffrey.

The criticism of Jeffrey may be taken as typical of that of the reviews in general. He was not an absolute monarch, ruling by divine right in accordance with an immutable standard set by the classics; he was rather the chief of an aristocracy of men of taste, and he admitted that the laws of taste varied and advanced. But as the spokesman of this aristocracy he was as positive and dogmatic as Doctor Johnson himself. The motto of the *Edinburgh Review*, "the judge is condemned when the guilty is acquitted," shows the spirit of judicial severity with which he exercised his functions. Each author, each book came before his court to be tried, and, if necessary for the public good, condemned. Wordsworth, Scott, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats all fell under his ban.

The Romantic Critics.

In those days before the great modern reading public the critical reviews had immense power, and they used it often cruelly. A protest was made by Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, in which he insisted that the function of the critic was to stand between the author and the public, to interpret, not to judge. This attitude became characteristic of the romantic criticism in which Coleridge was joined by a group of writers who were all somewhat under

the spell of his personality—Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, Thomas De Quincey, and Leigh Hunt. This group of writers was distinctly urban. With the exception of De Quincey they lived in or near London, and some of them earned the title of the Cockney School, in distinction from the Lake School of poetry. Without the romantic resources of nature, they found compensation in literature, which they approached with sympathetic appreciation and with romantic enthusiasm. They humanized literary criticism by introducing an autobiographic and personal element, by making it, in other words, the story of their own adventures in the world of books, and an account of what they found there. Thus they abandoned the old dogmatic and judicial criticism, characteristic of the classical school, and approached that modern attitude which we call impressionistic. They were especially drawn to a field which abounded in romantic elements, and the chief service to letters in which they all shared was the recovery and interpretation of the Elizabethan and seventeenth-century poets and dramatists—an enterprise to which Coleridge contributed his lectures on Shakespeare, Lamb his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, and Hazlitt his series of lectures on *The Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* and *The Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*.

Charles Lamb was born in London in 1775, and was brought up within the precincts of the ancient law-courts his father being a servant to an advocate of the Inner Temple. From the cloisters of the Temple he was sent to the cloisters of Christ's Hospital, where he had for a classmate Coleridge, his lifelong friend.[1] At seventeen he became a clerk in the India House, and here he spent the working hours of the next thirty-three years, until he was retired on a pension

Charles Lamb.

[1] See Lamb's "Recollections of Christ's Hospital" and "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago," in the *Essays of Elia*.

in 1825.[1] His devotion to his sister Mary, upon whom rested an hereditary taint of insanity, has done almost as much as the sweetness and gentle humor of his writings to endear his name. He died in 1834, his sister outliving him and gradually sinking into that mental darkness from which his patience and tenderness had upheld her.

His Literary Criticism.

Lamb's first successful literary venture was his *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807), written in collaboration with his sister, and intended for children. The fineness of Lamb's critical gift, which was at least suggested in these rewordings of Shakespeare's plots, was brilliantly illustrated a year later by his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, with critical comments. His reading in the Elizabethan drama was extensive, his appreciation of its qualities subtle and penetrating, and his enthusiasm for it unbounded. The book did much to revive the almost extinguished fame of the lesser dramatists grouped about Shakespeare. It is one of the earliest as well as one of the most significant products of the new romantic criticism.

"Essays of Elia."

But it was not as a critic of literature but as a commentator upon life, as a gentle egoist, without a trace of vanity or self-assertion, recording his moods, his memories, his witty and tender observations, that Lamb was to fulfil his peculiar literary destiny. The *Essays of Elia*,[2] published at intervals in the *London Magazine*, were at length gathered together and republished in two series, the first in 1823, the second ten years later. They established Lamb in the title which he still holds, that of the most delightful of English essayists. They cover a great variety of topics, but the approach to the subject is always a personal

[1] See Elia Essay, "The Superannuated Man."

[2] The pseudonym Elia was borrowed by Lamb from an Italian clerk in the South Sea House named Ellia. The change of spelling has led to the broadening of the initial letter in pronunciation.

one; and it is this intimate quality, communicating to us by some intangible suggestion the author's odd and lovable personality, which constitutes their chief charm.

Their Matter.

Many of them are confessions of personal prejudice, such as the essay entitled "Imperfect Sympathies," where Lamb's dislike of Scotchmen and his taste for Quakers are made matter of delicious mirth. In "Old China" Lamb gives a winning picture of his home life with his sister, who appears here and elsewhere as "Cousin Bridget." In "Dream Children," a beautiful and deeply affecting essay, he talks with two children conjured from nothingness to solace for an hour his lonely hearth. To turn from an essay like this to the famous extravaganza entitled "A Dissertation on Roast Pig," is to sound the full gamut of Lamb's pathos and humor.

Their Style.

The style of these essays is curiously compounded of elements borrowed from older writers, especially from Burton and Sir Thomas Browne. But in passing through Lamb's temperament these elements are fused into a style wholly new and individual, betraying its remote origin only by a certain rareness and charming quaintness of flavor. The Elia papers continue the traditions of essay writing fixed by Addison and Steele, but their range is wider, and their treatment of human life is marked by the more searching pathos, the more sensitive and flashing humor, which belonged to Lamb as a partaker in the spiritual awakening of the nineteenth century.

The romantic tinge of Lamb's mind is the more noteworthy because, like the eighteenth-century men from whom he borrowed the idea of the essay, he cared little for natural beauty, and was essentially an urban spirit. London, its streets, its shops, its theatres, was the place of his affection, and he has pictured many of the phases of its life with the vividness that comes from personal

delight. In him we see, in a very curious and striking way, the increment of romantic sensibility infused into and transforming a nature belonging in many respects to the age of the Queen Anne wits.

William Hazlitt.

Quite the opposite of Lamb in temperament, but like him a romantic essayist and critic, is William Hazlitt (1778–1830). Hazlitt's father was a Unitarian clergyman who held several parishes in America after the Revolution. In 1798 he was, however, settled at Wem, in Shropshire, where Coleridge, at that time also a preacher of the same persuasion, came to visit him. Hazlitt has left a vivid portrait of Coleridge at that time in his essay "My First Acquaintance with Poets," and a still more vivid account of the stimulating influence of his conversation. It was under this energizing influence that Hazlitt became a critic of art, literature, and politics. He contributed much by his lectures to arouse interest in the Elizabethan writers; he championed the liberal cause in politics during the years of Tory reaction; he even wrote a eulogistic life of Napoleon. But he is chiefly remembered for the miscellaneous essays, in which he touched various aspects of life, such as "The Fight," "Going on a Journey," "On Actors and Acting," "On the Look of a Gentleman," "On the Pleasures of Painting." These he contributed to various periodicals and afterward collected in volumes, *Table Talk*, *The Round Table*, etc. They reveal the breadth and variety of his interests, and the energy with which he pursued them—a full-hearted zest quite different from the quiet humor of Charles Lamb.

Hazlitt's Criticism.

Hazlitt carried the same spirit into his enjoyment of literature. He often introduces us to authors and to books by telling us the story of his own acquaintance with them, recalling with infinite gusto the sensations which they gave him. Of *Tom Jones* he tells us: "It came down in numbers

once a fortnight, in Cooke's pocket edition, embellished with cuts. I had hitherto read only in school-books . . . but this had a different relish with it—'sweet in the mouth,' though not 'bitter in the belly.' It smacked of the world I lived in, and in which I was to live—and showed me groups, 'gay creatures,' not 'of the element,' but of the earth; not 'living in the clouds,' but travelling the same road that I did. . . . My heart had palpitated at the thoughts of a boarding-school ball, or a gala-day at Midsummer or Christmas; but the world I had found out in Cooke's Edition of the *British Novelists* was to me a dance through life, a perpetual gala-day." There is something spontaneous and contagious about such criticism; the reader is led on by the mood of the writer. It is in this impressionistic attitude toward literature that Hazlitt anticipates critics of a later generation, especially Robert Louis Stevenson.

Hazlitt's Personality.

Hazlitt chose the unpopular side in politics; he was unlucky in love and marriage, and he quarrelled furiously with his friends, even Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt. He needed all the compensations that art and literature could give him. He is, indeed, in many ways quite the opposite of Charles Lamb, being somewhat coarse and boisterous where Lamb is refined and subtle; often harsh and repellent where Lamb is gentle and winning. His style is more obvious than Lamb's, with more direct emphasis and the embellishment of many quotations. Like Lamb's, however, it is eminently personal and intimate, and has often a true note of pathos in its revelation of the author's disappointed life. "So have I loitered my life away," he writes, "reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, or writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that have wanted everything."

In Thomas De Quincey the romantic element is even

more pronounced, and displays itself not only in his writings but in the circumstances of his life. He was born in Manchester in 1785, the son of a prosperous merchant in the foreign trade. At sixteen he ran away from the Manchester grammar-school, and spent a summer wandering in North Wales, often sleeping on the open hills or in the tents of gypsies. When the cold weather came on, he made his way to London, where he led a starved and vagrant existence, until he was reclaimed by his family and sent to Oxford. He was one of the earliest converts to the "Lake poetry," and after leaving college he established himself at Grasmere, in the neighborhood of Wordsworth and Southey. Here he lived for more than twenty years, reading prodigiously and eating vast quantities of opium. By reason of some peculiarity of his constitution the drug was less fatal in its workings than is commonly the case; but the splendid and tumultuous dreams which it brought were paid for by periods of awful gloom and lassitude. In his thirty-first year De Quincey married. Forced to earn money by his pen, he published in 1821–1822 the famous *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, and from this time forth he poured out magazine articles on almost every conceivable topic. In 1830 he removed, with his wife and children, to Edinburgh, where he resided until his death in 1859.

Thomas De Quincey.

His best-known work is also his most characteristic, the *Opium-Eater* and its sequel, *Suspiria de Profundis*. Only a small portion of the *Opium-Eater* deals with the subject of opium-taking. It is an extended autobiography, covering the life of the author from early childhood to about the year 1819, when his bondage to opium became absolute, and he descended into the valley of the shadow, where he was to gather the dolorous matter of his *Suspiria*. The most powerful portion of the narrative, aside from

"Confessions of an Opium-Eater."

the description of his opium-sensations, is that which tells of his life of vagrancy and starvation in London, and of his nightly wanderings with "poor Ann" through the crowded desolation of Oxford Street. The *Suspiria de Profundis* (Sighs from the Depths) is made up mainly of dream-phantasies transcribed from the actual wanderings of his mind under the spell of opium, or suggested by them.

His Characteristic Style.

In such phantasmagoric imaginings as "Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow," in the *Suspiria*, and the "Dream-Fugue" appended to the *English Mail-Coach*, De Quincey ventured upon a new domain of imaginative prose; a region audaciously won from verse, to which, by virtue of its impassioned and ideal character, it properly belongs. His studies of Elizabethan prose-writers may have given him the hint; but he carried out as a deliberate experiment what with them had been an unconscious confusion of the categories of prose and verse. In doing so he revealed new possibilities in the English tongue. The following passage from the *Opium-Eater* will illustrate the poetical quality of his style. It describes a series of dreams suggested by the sight of a mysterious Malay, who appeared one day at De Quincey's door: "I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, that are found in all tropical regions. . . . I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, by paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed for centuries at the summit, or in secret rooms; I was the idol; I was the priest; I was worshipped; I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brama through all the forests of Asia; Vishnu hated me; Seeva lay in wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris: I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. Thousands of years I lived and was buried in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of

eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by crocodiles, and was laid, confounded with all unutterable abortions, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud." Upon this and similar passages of richly wrought, chanting prose, De Quincey's fame as a writer rests. The qualities of style exhibited in them have had a great influence upon the prose-writing of the century, an influence which can be traced in such widely different writers as Bulwer and Ruskin.

His Defects as a Writer.

Two serious charges are to be brought against De Quincey as a writer—diffuseness and triviality. He cannot resist the slightest temptation to digress, and even in the most solemn pages of his Confessions, and in the midst of the touching story of Joan of Arc's childhood, he is capable of falling into a queer kind of "rigmarole" made up of pedantry and mirthless jesting. In reading him we are often visited by an uncomfortable sense of dealing with a nature not quite responsible and not quite human. He illustrates both the defects and the virtues of the romantic temper; its virtues in the enkindled splendor of his fancy and the impassioned sweep of his style; its defects in his extravagance, his unevenness, his failure to exercise adequate self-criticism.

Classical Reaction in Landor.

During the period of lull following the death of Byron and preceding the outburst of the new Victorian literature, a decided reaction from the romantic to the classic ideal is seen in Walter Savage Landor. In him this reaction is the more noteworthy because he began as a romantic poet of the extreme type, and wrote romantic dramas until a year or two before Byron's death; when he began to cultivate the classical, dignified, restrained prose for which his name is famous.

Landor's life was a very long one. Born in 1775, he published an important poem, *Gebir*, in 1798, a short

while before the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge heralded the triumph of the Romantic Movement. *Gebir* is a fantastic narrative, conceived in a mood of wild romanticism such as only Shelley could rival; upon Shelley, indeed, the poem had a strong influence. If Landor had had, at this earlier period, greater artistic poise and sureness, *Gebir* and not the *Lyrical Ballads* might now be held to signalize the triumph of the new romantic poetry. But the poem is incoherent and immature, and in spite of many beauties is a failure. It lies outside Landor's characteristic work, as do likewise the efforts which he made during the next twenty-five years in the romantic drama. It was not until his forty-sixth year that he found his genuine manner, and began to produce work of permanent beauty. In 1821 he went to Italy and settled near Florence, on the slope of Fiesole, in a beautiful villa, the garden of which, full of clouds of olive-trees and spires of cypress, commanded a magnificent view of the valley of the Arno and the far-stretching hills of Tuscany. Here he wrote most of those lofty and serene works by which he will be remembered, especially the *Imaginary Conversations* (1824–1846) and *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836).

Landor's Life.

The vitality of Landor's genius in old age is almost without parallel. At seventy he published a series of poems on subjects from old Greek life, which have all the freshness and spontaneous joy of youth. At least one of these, the "Hamadryad," should be read in connection with the loveliest of Landor's youthful lyrics, "Rose Aylmer," in order that the persistence of his freshness of feeling through a literary career of fifty years may be appreciated. He died in 1864, long after his early contemporaries had passed away, and a new generation of writers had arisen, with new aims and ideals. His literary life covered the immense span from the earliest work of Wordsworth to the *Atalanta in Calydon* of Swinburne.

His personal life, in curious contrast with the serenity and classic poise of his best work, was one of constant storm, of furious quarrels, and eccentric outbursts of temper. There is something pathetic in the unconscious irony of the opening line of the quatrain in which he took leave of earth:

> I strove with none, for none was worth my strife:
> Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
> I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
> It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

The "Imaginary Conversations."

In the *Imaginary Conversations*, Landor brings together significant personalities, from all lands and all periods of history, sometimes in couples, sometimes in larger groups, and represents them in talk with one another. The Saxon earl Leofric talks with his bride Godiva as they ride into Coventry; Æsop, the Phrygian fable-writer, talks with Rhodope, a young Greek slave-girl, in the house of their Egyptian master; Henry the Eighth talks with Anne Boleyn in her prison; Dante talks with Beatrice in a Florentine garden in spring; the young Marcellus, wounded to death, confronts for a moment the conquering Hannibal. For the most part, the characters which Landor evokes are lofty and magnanimous ones; and the dialogue shows no attempt at dramatic realism, but is always stately, pure, and exquisitely finished. Nothing is allowed to interfere with the classical precision and chaste rhythmic beauty of the style. In a sense, all the characters of the Conversations talk alike, using a diction and idiom removed from the realities of daily speech, and suggesting their individuality only by the more subtle differences of their thought and action. There is a certain aloofness and austerity in Landor's manner which often repel the reader on first acquaintance, but which, when once accepted, rather add to than

lessen his pleasure. The purpose which lurks behind the Conversations, too, is usually as nobly and calmly serious as the style. It is these three characteristics, loftiness of character, dignity of style, and nobility of purpose, which make the *Imaginary Conversations* classic, in the broader sense of the word; and which make them, after Milton's poetry, perhaps the best substitute afforded by English literature for a training in the Greek and Latin writers.

"Pericles and Aspasia."

In *Pericles and Aspasia* Landor substituted for the conversational manner the epistolary. In a series of familiar letters passing between the major and the minor characters of the book, we are told how Aspasia, a young woman of Asia Minor, comes to Athens, then at the height of its splendor under the wise rule of Pericles; how she meets the great leader, and comes to know, on terms of intimate friendship, Alcibiades, Socrates, and many other famous men of the age. We are given thus, in a delightfully natural and casual way, a picture of the intellectual capital of the antique world in its heyday, a picture which makes the Athens of Pericles seem wonderfully near at hand and comprehensible. Aspasia, as she reveals herself in her letters, is a triumph of feminine portraiture. Her playfulness, her wit, her girlish adventurousness, her unpedantic delight in intellectual things, the womanly way in which her nature rises and sobers itself to meet the grave nature of Pericles, all combine harmoniously to make a woman such as Shakespeare might have created.

Transition to the Victorian Era.

From the death of Byron in 1824 until the decisive appearance of Tennyson in 1842, there was a period of comparative exhaustion in English literature. Keats and Shelley were dead; Coleridge was lost in metaphysics, and Wordsworth had almost ceased to produce poetry of value; Scott died in 1832, and the best work of Lamb was done before that date. The first great wave of romanticism,

which had begun to rise a century before, with Thomson and Gray, and which had reached its height in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, had passed by. During this period of lull, the new forces which were to go to the making of literature during the reign of Victoria were gathering head. Tennyson, Browning, and Carlyle had already appeared; and, although they remained as yet comparatively obscure, they were doing some of their greatest work. Thomas Hood (1798–1845) in his "Bridge of Sighs" and "Song of the Shirt" had struck the note of humanitarian sympathy with the unfortunate and oppressed, which was to swell in volume and depth through the whole course of Victorian literature. We must now consider what other distinctive elements went to the making of that literature, gigantic in bulk and almost infinite in variety, which places the era of Victoria beside that of Elizabeth.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE VICTORIAN ERA

General Characteristics of Victorian Literature.

THE literature of the long reign of Victoria (1837–1901) presents the features natural in an era of great social change and intellectual advancement. Never before, not even in the troubled seventeenth century, have there been such rapid and sweeping changes in the social fabric of the English-speaking races; and never before has literature been so closely in league, or so openly at war, with the forces of social life. Among the many circumstances making for change, the chief one has been the growth of democracy. The Reform Bill of 1832 placed the political power of England in the hands of the middle class, and since that date there has been a gradual extension of the suffrage to the working classes. With the growth of democracy have gone the spread of popular education, and a great increase in the number of readers of books. A vast body of people who heretofore had little or no access to literature have been reached by it, and have in turn influenced its character. Almost all the great Victorian writers have been absorbed in the attempt to move, instruct, or inspire the huge, unleavened mass of society. The astonishing development of the mechanical arts and of commerce, while it has increased the comforts of living, has led to an absorption in material interests against which nearly every great writer has lifted his voice in protest and warning. The discoveries of science have thrown into the world a multitude of conceptions of the most revolutionary kind, unsettling many of the old bases of religious belief, and affecting literature in numberless ways. Along with these causes of change

there has gone, also, a restless search after some new form of society, or some modification of the old forms, by which the claims of all men to life and opportunity should be met. Social unrest is the great distinguishing feature of the Victorian era; and the demand for social justice has colored, in one way or another, the whole thought of the time.

Its Social Purpose.

It follows from all this that the most striking characteristic of Victorian literature is its strenuousness, its conscious purpose. Both poets and prose-writers have worked under the shadow and burden of a conscious social responsibility. Almost all of them have been makers of doctrine, preachers of some crusade, or physicians offering some cure for man's perplexities and despairs. Instead of the light-hearted interest in life which the Elizabethans show, instead of the transcendental dreaming of the generation of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, we find as the prevailing mood an earnest and often troubled facing of the issues of life, which are recognized to be momentous.

Its Romanticism.

Nevertheless, the romantic impulse persists. There are some minor reversions to classicism, but, taken largely, literature has continued to be romantic, in the novelty and variety of its form, in its search after undiscovered springs of beauty and truth, in its emotional and imaginative intensity. Especially is this romantic impulse seen in the effort to bring to light the unusual and surprising elements in real and commonplace things, to startle men out of their acceptance of such things as typical and conventional. Even in its realism the age has been, on the whole, romantic. In fact, the whole literary effort of the Victorian age may be conceived of as an effort to open to the masses of men those sources of romantic feeling which in the early part of the century were known only to a few privileged souls.

At the opening of the period stands a writer who perfectly represents the spirit in which the moderate reform of 1832 had been won, and the satisfaction with which its authors regarded their work. Macaulay.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was born in 1800, of Scotch and Quaker ancestry. At Cambridge, in the midst of the political excitement which led up to the Reform Bill, he took a middle position between Tory and Radical, intrenching himself in the Whig principles of liberal conservatism, of which he was all his life a powerful and watchful champion. At college he distinguished himself as a writer and debater; and in 1825 his famous essay on Milton appeared in *The Edinburgh Review*, followed by other essays which fastened attention upon him as a new force in literature. At thirty he entered Parliament, in time to take a conspicuous part in the passage of the Reform Bill. Four years later he went to India as legal adviser to the Supreme Council, returning in 1838 to play once more a leading rôle in Parliament, until his defeat in 1847. During these nine years appeared several of his most famous essays, notably those on the Indian proconsuls, Clive and Warren Hastings. In 1842 he published his *Lays of Ancient Rome*, dignified and vigorous celebrations, in ballad verse, of the antique civic virtues, as shown in Horatius, Virginius, and other Roman worthies. The next year, after long delay, he began to realize the dream of his life, in the publication of the first part of his *History of England*. He accomplished, in the five completed volumes of his history, only a fragment of the task which he had set himself. He died in 1859.

Gladstone bears testimony that an announcement of Macaulay's intention to speak in Parliament was "like a trumpet-call to fill the benches." His power as an orator furnishes the key to what is most characteristic in his essays. In a speech the meaning must be so clearly

stated, so aptly illustrated, so skilfully repeated and reemphasized, that misunderstanding shall be impossible; and the flagging attention of the audience must be continually stimulated by strong contrasts, by striking antitheses, and by an illusion of rapidity, even where the movement is, by the necessity of the subject, slow. Suggestiveness, delicate shades of meaning of a sort to make the hearer hesitate and ponder, defeat the ends of parliamentary discourse; high imaginativeness, strong appeal to the more mystical and spiritual sides of man's nature, are here out of place. Everything must be open, sensible, emphatic. In all these respects Macaulay's essays are true to the type of parliamentary speaking. Probably no writer has ever been more skilful than Macaulay in making his whole meaning clear; none more successful in keeping the reader's mind awake, and his sense of movement agreeably satisfied. But, on the other hand, few writers of the century have been so limited to considerations of actual fact. He is always downright and positive, never in doubt, and never at a loss. Mystics like Plato, masters of pure thought like Bacon, complex religious natures like Doctor Johnson, fare badly at his hands. But his defects served him perhaps as much as his virtues in his work of popularizing knowledge. From the stores of his capacious memory, one of the most marvellous on record, he presented in lucid and entertaining form a great mass of fact and opinion, the educative power of which was and still continues to be very great.

His Essays: Their Style and Matter.

In his *History* he carried his popularizing zeal into a more difficult field, and scored even a more notable success. His aim was to write a history of England from the accession of James II to the end of George IV's reign, in a manner so concrete, picturesque, and dramatic, that his narrative of actual events should have the fascination of romance;

"History of England."

and, as he himself put the case, should have the power "to supersede the last fashionable novel upon the dressing-table of young ladies." The portion of the story which he lived to complete is, in fact, presented with a wealth and minuteness of detail concerning particular persons, places, and events, such as a writer of fiction uses to embody the creations of his fancy. We do not find in Macaulay a profound view of underlying causes, that large intellectual interpretation of events which constitutes the "philosophy of history"; but in recompense he gives us a fascinating story, a broad and luminous canvas covered with firmly delineated pictures, which change before our eyes into new groupings, and give place to other spectacles, as in a magic diorama.

Macaulay's essays were chiefly written between 1825 and 1840, in the period of lull which followed the romantic outburst of the early part of the century. This was also the period of great industrial and commercial expansion, when material prosperity was bringing the middle class into power. The Reform Bill of 1832 gave this class a large share in the representative government of England, and was regarded by many as a final step in accommodating the political institutions of the country to the legitimate demands of the people. Macaulay at heart was well satisfied with the results of his own time. In his complacent view of life, as well as in his pointed, emphatic style, he reflects the character of this period, when men were inclined to exchange the idealistic longings and aspirations of the previous era for a satisfied acceptance of the practical benefits which commerce, liberal government, and the mechanical sciences were bringing to English life. In his essay on Bacon he contrasts the aims of philosophy in the days of Plato and Seneca with that practical application of knowledge which it was part of Bacon's system to further. "The aim of Platonic philosophy," he says, "was

Macaulay's View of Life.

to exalt man into a god. The aim of the Baconian philosophy was to provide man with what he requires while he continues to be man. . . . An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would no doubt be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born."

In all this Macaulay offers a striking contrast to the later social criticism of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold, who united in bidding men ponder what their boasted progress was progress toward, and whether, in their zeal for worship of the steam-engine and the ballot-box, they were not perchance bowing down to heathen idols, forgetting the God of the spirit. Before considering their protest against materialism, however, we must take account of a somewhat earlier one in the field of religion, which had an important influence on literature—the Oxford Movement, led by John Henry Newman.

John Henry Newman and the Oxford Movement.

Newman was born in London in 1801. He went to Oxford, was elected a fellow of Oriel College, and took orders in the English Church, becoming vicar of Saint Mary's Church in the university city. He was closely associated with a group of friends whose object came to be to reclaim the Church of England from the torpor and deadness into which it had fallen, and to give it once more the poetry, the mystic symbolism, the spiritual power, and the beauty of architecture, ritual, and service which had characterized the Catholic Church in the Middle Age. In this respect the Oxford Movement was an outgrowth of the Romantic Movement. Newman himself states that it owed much to Scott, "who turned men's minds in the direction of the Middle Ages," as well as to Coleridge,

Southey, and Wordsworth. Newman and his friends wished also to defend the church, in view of its divine character, against the interference of the state, which was disposed to reform it along with Parliament and other institutions, curtailing its powers and revenues. The original inspiration of the movement was given by John Keble (1792–1866), whose volume of devotional verse, *The Christian Year* (1827), like George Herbert's *Temple*, directed men's minds toward the sources of poetry in the beliefs and practices of the church.

In 1833 Newman took a trip to Italy, in the course of which the vague feeling of his mission to redeem the English Church settled into a firm resolve. At Palermo, as he lay dangerously ill of a fever, he kept exclaiming: "I shall not die; I have a work to do." Sailing from Palermo to Marseilles in an orange-boat, he was becalmed in the straits of Bonifacio, and here he wrote the famous hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light." Upon his return he began a series of *Tracts for the Times*, of which the purpose was to define the position and beliefs of the English Church. From this title came the name Tractarian, by which his party was called. He expressed the inner meaning of the movement by the sermons preached on Sunday afternoons at Saint Mary's, which drew the young men of Oxford to become his followers in this spiritual renaissance. The conception of the church which Newman held gradually drew him toward Roman Catholicism; the famous "Tract 90," in which he tried to show that membership in the Church of England was not inconsistent with many beliefs and practices peculiar to the Church of Rome, was condemned by the University; Newman and his more ardent followers withdrew from Oxford to a semimonastic establishment at Littlemore, whence in 1845 he was received into the Church of Rome. This step, separating Newman as it did from many of his friends and cowork-

Newman at Oxford.

ers, is beautifully commemorated in his sermon, "The Parting of Friends."

Newman's conversion was a great shock to the English Church. Some of his supporters followed him into the Catholic Church, the most famous being Henry Edward Manning (1808–1892). Others, such as James Anthony Froude, reacted violently into the liberalism and scepticism against which the Oxford Movement had been directed. Newman was himself bitterly accused of dishonesty and treachery. To such charges, especially those put forward by Charles Kingsley, he replied in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1865), in which he gave an account of his religious opinions, and of the Oxford Movement, so winning and so exquisite in its frankness and sincerity that he became from that time forth an object of veneration to his countrymen, almost a national saint. Before this he had been engaged in founding a university at Dublin, from which undertaking sprang his lectures on *The Idea of a University*. Aside from this the most notable of his writings as a Catholic are *A Grammar of Assent* (1870), in which he combats the scientific view of belief as depending on logical conclusions drawn from facts perceived by the senses; and *The Dream of Gerontius*, a poem of death and the rising of the soul to God. In 1878 he was made cardinal by Pope Leo XIII; twelve years later he died at the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri, Edgbaston, which he had established.

Newman as Catholic.

Newman was a writer in the service of his cause, not primarily an artist, yet he achieved very high distinction in English literature. His works embrace many volumes of sermons, theological treatises, church history, and two novels, as well as the essays, poems, and autobiography already mentioned. Perhaps because of his singleness of purpose Newman's prose is characterized by wonderful transparency. He is as clear in handling subjects of extreme diffi-

Newman's Style.

culty as Macaulay in those which he had reduced to extreme simplicity. Moreover, Macaulay's idea reaches us through a resisting medium; Newman's idea is one with the medium; his words convey his meaning as ether conveys light. Add to this the charm of Newman's personal, colloquial tone, and the haunting melody of his cadences, and we see the source of his mysterious power, by virtue of which the Oxford Movement is remembered as one of the touchingly beautiful stories of human companionship and endeavor, comparable to that of Jesus and his disciples, or Saint Francis and his order.

Macaulay represents belief in the world with its political and industrial progress; Newman, a return to faith in a church separated from the world, working under divine inspiration. There were many in these years who could not be satisfied with the first, nor accept the second, who yearned for some spiritual interpretation of the world which would save them from acquiescence in its materialism, and would give hope of social reform deeper than the improvement of governmental machinery. To such the writings of Thomas Carlyle came as a gospel.

Carlyle: Life and Writings.

Carlyle was born in 1795 at Ecclefechan, a village of the Scotch lowlands. After graduating from the University of Edinburgh, he rejected the ministry, for which he had been intended, and determined to be "a writer of books." In these early days of privation and loneliness, with dyspepsia "gnawing like a rat at the pit of his stomach," he fought the battle which he afterward described in *Sartor Resartus*. The "Everlasting No," the voice of unfaith denying God and the worth of life, he put from him; the "Everlasting Yea," the assurance that life could be made divine through labor and courage, he wrote on his banner, as he went forth to do battle against the selfishness and spiritual torpor of the age. Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* (1823) and his translations from the German got him a

hearing with the publishers, but his earnings remained extremely small. After his marriage with Jane Welsh they went to live at Craigenputtoch, a farmhouse amid miles of high, dreary moor, in a "solitude almost druidical." Here Carlyle passed six years (1828–1834). During this time he produced *Sartor Resartus*, the book in which he first developed his characteristic style and thought, and wrote several masterly essays, notably those on Burns and Boswell's Johnson. In 1834 he came to London, taking the house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, where he spent the long remainder of his life. In 1837 he published *The French Revolution*, which turned the tide of public favor toward him. For more than thirty years after this he stood as teacher and preacher to the people of England and America, thundering above them wrath, warning, and exhortation. The most notable works of this long period were *Chartism* (1839), an anti-democratic deliverance on the demands of the people for a "charter," or written constitution, involving, among other concessions, that of universal suffrage; *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841), a great sermon on veneration, exhorting the world to love, honor, and submit in childlike obedience to its heroic men, whether they appear as warrior, poet, or priest; *Past and Present* (1843), an account of how one strong man as abbot brought order out of confusion in the monastery of Saint Edmunds, with its lesson for modern England eloquently enforced; *Cromwell* (1845), a study of one of Carlyle's typical heroes as King; *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850); the *Life of John Sterling* (1853), a masterpiece of sympathetic biography; and the *History of Friedrich II* (1858–1865), a vast picture of the life and times of the founder of the Prussian state. From 1865 until his death in 1881 the respect in which Carlyle's name was held steadily increased, though other teachers were rising to take his place, and some of the dogmas for which he stood were being undermined by time and criticism.

The actual doctrines which Carlyle preached with such Hebraic intensity—his "Gospel of Work," his political dogma of "Government by the Best" (instead of "government by the worst," as he held democracy to be), and all the other shibboleths of his unending warfare with his age—are of less moment than the spirit which broadly underlies his writing. This spirit may be defined as an intense moral indignation against whatever is weak, or false, or mechanical; an intense moral enthusiasm for whatever is sincere and heroically forceful. From this point of view his two typical books are *Sartor Resartus* and *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. The first is an attack upon all those social shams and mechanisms which defeat the sincerity of life; the second is a pæan of praise for those chosen heroic spirits who join earnestness with power. Like Byron, Carlyle is in romantic revolt against convention; like Wordsworth and Shelley, though in a very different way from either, he seeks for some positive ideal upon which to construct a habitable moral world in place of the uninhabitable one he has striven to destroy. *Sartor Resartus*, which is both destructive and constructive, is preeminent in doctrinal interest among all his books. It is also extremely ingenious in plan, and is written with a wonderful mingling of wild sardonic humor, keen pathos, and an eloquence and imaginative elevation almost biblical.

Underlying Spirit of His Work.

"Sartor Resartus" means "the tailor re-tailored," and its theme is clothes. It purports to be the fragment of a great "clothes-philosophy," the life-work of an eccentric German scholar and recluse, Herr Diogenes Teufelsdröck. This philosophy has been left in wild confusion, scribbled on scattered leaves, and stuffed helter-skelter into twelve bags signed with the twelve signs of the Zodiac. Carlyle represents himself merely as editor and commentator of

"Sartor Resartus": Its Plan.

this weltering mass of words, endeavoring desperately to extract order out of chaos, and to lighten a little, with much head-shaking and consternation, the dark and mystic abysses of the German professor's thought. This whimsical fancy of Carlyle's enables him to be both author and commentator; to state astounding paradoxes and then shrug his shoulders in sign of his own irresponsibility; to take the side of his opponents against what he, as a well-regulated editor, pretends to find extravagant and crazy doctrine, but what is really his own passionate heart's belief, however perversely expressed.

Its Meaning.

The book has a twofold meaning. In the first place, it is a veiled sardonic attack upon the shams and pretenses of society, upon hollow rank, hollow officialism, hollow custom, out of which life and usefulness have departed. These are, Carlyle hints, the clothes which hide the real form of society, garments once useful, but grown by lapse of time to be mere fantastic frippery and stiff disfigurement, stifling the breath and health of the social body. Under the shield of this novel idea, he attacks the mechanical view of life, mechanical education, mechanical government, mechanical religion; and he preaches, now with drollery and paradox, now with fiery earnestness and prophetic possession, a return to sincerity in all things. In the second place, Carlyle applies the clothes-philosophy mystically to the universe at large; showing that as clothes hide the real man, and as custom and convention hide real society, so time and space hide the real spiritual essence of the universe. He gives us, as the climax of the book, a transcendental vision of all created nature as the garment of God; the same idea which Goethe put forth in his description of the earth-spirit in Faust:

> I sit at the roaring loom of Time
> And weave the living garment of God.

The fiction that he was translating from the German gave Carlyle an excuse for developing in *Sartor Resartus* a style of expression entirely without example, full of un-English idiom, of violent inversions, startling pauses, and sharp angularities —a style which he employed to rouse the attention of his reader as by a series of electric shocks. This extraordinary literary instrument he continued to use for the remainder of his life. It has been said that henceforth he wrote English no more, but "Carlylese." Whatever may be thought of "Carlylese" on purely artistic grounds, it is certain that it was wonderfully well suited to his purpose of rousing a sluggish public out of mental and moral apathy, into an alertness to great issues.

Its Style: "Carlylese."

Sartor Resartus proved Carlyle to be, with all discount for the perversities of his style, a great literary artist. This title was broadened and confirmed by his historical masterpiece, *The French Revolution*. Here we see to best advantage what Emerson calls the "stereoscopic imagination" of Carlyle, which detaches the figures from the background, and gives to the individual portraits unmatched vividness. The stupid, patient King, the "lion Mirabeau," the "sea-green incorruptible Robespierre," Marat the "large-headed dwarfish individual of smoke-bleared aspect"—not only these chief figures, but the minor ones, a multitude of them, stand out in the reader's memory unforgettably. The larger pictures are equally admirable; the storming of the Bastille, the Feast of Pikes, the long-drawn agony of the Night of Spurs. Above all, the unity and sweep of the story, reminding us of a play of Shakespeare or of Æschylus, only acted by millions of figures on a gigantic stage, make this the capital example in English of the dramatic portraiture of an historical era, and establish beyond question Carlyle's right to be considered a great constructive artist.

"The French Revolution."

Carlyle poured into the life of his time a stream of intense moral ardor and indignation which broke up the congealed waters and permanently raised the standard of ethical feeling. He united in remarkable degree the artistic and the moral impulse; and he is in this respect typical of the Victorian era, during which, more than ever before, art has been infused with moral purpose. But his nature was too extravagant, his tone too bitterly protesting, and his method too perverse, to allow him to become the supremely representative figure of the age. This position was reserved for Alfred Tennyson.

Carlyle's Service to His Age.

Tennyson was born in 1809, at Somersby Rectory, Lincolnshire. His father was a vicar of the Established Church, holding his living by gift from a large landed proprietor; so that Tennyson was from birth in close connection with the main conservative interests of England, ecclesiastical and economic. In 1830, while an undergraduate at Cambridge, he published his first volume, a group of little verse-studies in word-melody and word-picture. Two years later appeared a second volume, showing, in such poems as "The Lady of Shalott" and "The Lotus-Eaters," a control both of mediæval and classical story, and in certain others, like "The Palace of Art," giving indication of his ambition to be not a singer merely, but also a teacher. In "The Miller's Daughter" and "The May Queen," he began his long series of idylls of English life, short narratives richly pictured and melodiously tuned, with which he was destined to win the public, all the more easily perhaps because of a touch of sentimentality and unreality in their treatment.

Tennyson's Early Life and Poetry.

In 1836 Tennyson went to live near London, where he came into contact with Carlyle, and absorbed much of his spirit of social protest. He also found in the latter's spiritual view of the universe a support for his religious

faith which was to be sorely tried by doubt. For ten years he published nothing, but brooded and worked away in his London lodgings; until, in 1842, he came forth with two volumes which took the critics and the world by storm. In these two volumes the range and variety of work was phenomenal. Almost every province of poetry was touched upon, from the lyric simplicity of "Break, break, break" to the largely moulded epic narrative "Morte d'Arthur." In one of these poems, "Locksley Hall," he uttered the protest which young men like himself, of good though not noble birth, were feeling in the presence of class distinctions which subordinated love to rank, and of an industrial civilization which made gold the supreme test of success. "Locksley Hall" is to be contrasted with the romantic violence of Byron, and compared with the treatment of the same themes in the novels of Thackeray and Charles Kingsley.

"Locksley Hall."

Five years later, in 1847, appeared *The Princess*. It was Tennyson's contribution to the question, then beginning to be widely discussed, of the higher education of women. The subtitle is "A Medley," and no description could be more just. The story is fantastically mixed, of elements brought from many ages and countries, and the style, always ornate and richly jewelled, runs through the gamut of true and false eloquence, returning always to the "mock-heroic" key in which the whole poem is somewhat uncertainly pitched. In *The Princess* we see Tennyson's eagerness to touch the vital public questions of his time, in odd conflict with his pure poetic interest in picture and melody.

"The Princess."

In his next work, however, *In Memoriam* (1850), the poetry interpenetrates the theme, and the theme itself is one which was just then engaging the minds of men more passionately than ever before in the world's

history—the question of the immortality of the soul. The poem was written in memory of Arthur Hallam, a beloved friend and college-mate of Tennyson's, who had died in 1833. It consists of a hundred and thirty-one lyrics, "short swallow-flights of song," composed at intervals during seventeen years. In the beginning, the early phases of grief are touched upon, moods of stunned and bewildered sorrow; gradually the personal pain merges itself into anxious speculation concerning the mystery of death and the hope of immortality; through states of doubt, despair, and anguished question, the poem slowly mounts into a region of firm though saddened faith; and it ends in a full hymnal music breathing hope and fortitude of heart. When *In Memoriam* was written, Darwin's tremendous hypothesis of the evolution of human life from lower forms had not yet been given to the world[1] but the idea was already in the air, and in numberless ways science had begun to sap the old foundations of religious faith. Tennyson courageously faced the facts of science, as revealed in geology and biology; and he succeeded in wringing religious consolation from the very things which were dreaded as a fatal menace to religion. In helping to break down the false opposition between science on the one hand and poetry and spiritual faith on the other, *In Memoriam* did a great service to the age.

"In Memoriam."

In 1850 Wordsworth, who had been poet-laureate after Southey, died; and Tennyson took the laurel. A government pension enabled him to marry and to settle in the Isle of Wight. From this time until his death, forty-two years later, in 1892, he stood as the spokesman of his people in times of national sorrow or rejoicing. In such poems as "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "The Revenge," and the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," he min-

Tennyson as Laureate.

[1] The *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, the *Descent of Man* in 1871.

istered to national pride, fired the national courage, and brought poetry nearer to the national life than it had been since Shakespeare. In the *Idylls of the King* he devoted fifteen years to painting the character of the first English national hero, King Arthur, and in giving a new meaning to the legends which had grown up in the Middle Ages about the knights of the Round Table. In no way does he illustrate more conspicuously his tendency to forsake pure romance for romantic treatment of present realities than in these poems, which are full of suggestions of modern moral and social problems. King Arthur's attempt to bring civilization to his realm through the devotion of his knights fails because of sins which Tennyson felt to be the peculiar danger of his own age.

Tennyson's later work consisted largely of the series of dramas, for the most part based on English history—*Queen Mary* (1875), *Harold* (1876), *Becket* (1884). He was not highly successful in mastering the dramatic form, but his example recalled the former greatness and dignity of the stage and gave an early sign of its recovery. In "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" (1886) he replaced his earlier, rather boyish mood of protest by an arraignment of society for its sordid materialism, its vice, cruelty, and inefficiency, which reminds one of Carlyle in his bitterest mood. And then in a number of poems he recalled his old manner—in the classic beauty of "Demeter" and "The Death of Œnone"; in the allegory of noble striving toward the light in "Merlin and the Gleam"; in the instinctive and spontaneous trust of "Crossing the Bar." This poem, though not his latest, may be taken as his farewell word, spoken with solemn gladness as he put off into the mysterious sea of death.

His Later Work.

The Victorian age is unlike certain other great periods of literature in that it had no one theme or body of sub-

ject-matter peculiarly its own, such as the mythology of Greece, or the Christian faith of Dante or Milton. On the contrary, it drew material for poetry from all ages. Tennyson is in this respect typical. Classical, mediæval, and Renaissance themes in his pages are mingled with stories drawn from his own day, such as "Dora" and "Enoch Arden." To meet these various demands his style shows equal variety. He essayed every kind of poetry, the song, the idyll, the dramatic monologue, the dialect poem, the descriptive or "pageant" poem, the ballad, the war-ode, the threnody, the epic narrative, and the drama. In all these, except the pure drama, he attained high, and in some the highest excellence. Everywhere his style is one of exquisite finish, with a flawlessness of technic which it seems that no labor could improve. He did with style everything that conscious mastery can do. He emulated by turns the sweet felicity of Keats, the tender simplicity of Wordsworth, the straightforward vigor of Burns, the elusive melody and dreamlike magic of Coleridge, the stormy sweep of Byron, the large majesty of Milton; and he could blend them all into a style unmistakably Tennysonian, which impressed itself grandly upon his age. His is the best example in English of the "eclectic" style, made up of elements borrowed from many sources and perfectly fused together.

Range and Finish of His Style.

The predominating characteristic of Tennyson's mind is his sense of law. The thing which most impresses him is the spectacle of order in the universe. The highest praise which he can give England is that she is "a land of settled government," where freedom is ever "broadening down from precedent to precedent." He is impressed by science because its office is to show law reigning everywhere, subduing all life to a vast harmonious scheme. In *In Memoriam* a majestic movement is given to the poem by the fact that

His Sense of Law.

it follows the year twice through its revolutions, so that the succession of day and night, the moon's changing phases, the lapsing of the stars in their courses, the slow pageant of the seasons, seem at last to enfold with their large harmony and peace the forlorn heart of the mourner. This love of order also causes Tennyson to distrust individual whim and passion. The story of *The Princess* is the story of the overthrow, by a baby's touch, of all that is whimsical and false in the heroine's plan for the enfranchisement of her sex; and the moral is that woman's place in life must be determined by the natural law of her being. In the *Idylls of the King* not only is the passion of Lancelot and Guinevere portrayed as the source of the moral ruin of Arthur's kingdom, but even the search for the Holy Grail is represented as contributing to this ruin, because it draws off Arthur's knights from their true work of establishing order and justice, and causes them to lose themselves in the extravagances of mystical passion. Tennyson is in constant protest, open or covert, against the individualism which the Victorian era inherited from the romantic revival. Yet he is nevertheless the supremely representative figure of that era, because he included and reconciled a greater number of its diverse interests than any other single writer.

Tennyson and Browning Contrasted.

Robert Browning, who disputes with Tennyson the first place among Victorian poets, is Tennyson's opposite in almost every respect but fame and length of years. His genius was pre-eminently dramatic; his interest lay, not in universal law, but in individual passion. And his style, instead of being eclectic and carefully elaborated, was individual to the point of lawlessness, and often careless of form in the pursuit of meaning. Browning is strong where Tennyson is weak, weak where Tennyson is strong. Both shared almost equally in the Victorian tendency toward reflection, and toward a didactic aim; but their

reflection was exercised upon very different phenomena, and their teaching was widely opposed.

Browning: His Life and Poetic Career.

Browning was born in London in 1812. Mingled with the English and Scotch blood in his veins was a more distant strain of German and Creole, a fact of value in considering the wide cosmopolitan sympathy of his imagination. He passed his boyhood and youth in the suburb of Camberwell, near enough to London to make the great smoky city on the horizon a constant reminder of the complex human life he was to interpret more subtly and deeply than any poet had done since the Elizabethan age. His first stimulus to poetic creation was given by a volume of Shelley which he picked up by chance on a London book-stall in his fourteenth year. His first long poem, *Pauline*, published in 1833, is a half-dramatic study of the type of spiritual life which Shelley's own career embodied; and Shelley's influence is clearly traceable both in its thought and in its style. After a trip to Russia and Italy, Browning published *Paracelsus*, in his twenty-fourth year. This, like *Pauline*, is the "history of a soul." In it Browning's wonderful endowments are already manifest. His knowledge of the causes of spiritual growth and decay, his subtle analysis of motive and counter-motive, his eloquence in pleading a cause, the enkindled power and beauty of his language when blown upon by noble passion—all appear in full process of development. The hindrances from which he suffered are also only too clear, especially his tendency to lose himself in tangled thought and to grow harsh and obscure in pursuing the secondary suggestions of his theme. In *Sordello* (1840) these faults smother down the clear fire of poetry into a torpid smoke. In *Pippa Passes*, however (1841), he shook himself free from these faults of manner, and produced a poem of sustained beauty, as clear as sunlight, a work of simple, melodious, impassioned

art. Between 1840 and 1845 Browning was chiefly occupied with attempts in the acting drama, of which the most interesting are perhaps *In a Balcony*, *Colombe's Birthday*, *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, and *The Return of the Druses*. He had also begun those short poems dealing with special moments in the lives of various men and women, historical or imaginary, which constitute the most important division of his work. These are now included under such collective titles as *Dramatic Lyrics*, *Dramatic Romances*, and *Men and Women*.

In 1846 Browning married Elizabeth Barrett, whose poetic reputation was then far greater than his, and went to live in Italy. The pair settled at Florence, in the house called *Casa Guidi*, from which was taken the title of Mrs. Browning's poem on the Italian Liberation, *Casa Guidi Windows*. Here Browning continued his great series of dramatic monologues. Here, also, after Mrs. Browning's death in 1861, he began *The Ring and the Book*. This is the crowning effort of his genius for the vastness of its scope and its grasp of human nature; though it lacks the spontaneous grace and charm which the best of his shorter pieces share with *Pippa Passes*, that perfect fruit of his youthful imagination. After the death of his wife, Browning spent most of his time in England. He wrote much, with a steady gain in intellectual subtlety, but with a corresponding loss of poetic beauty. He made a more and more deliberate sacrifice of form to matter, wrenching and straining the verse-fabric in order to pack into it all the secondary meanings of the theme. To the last, however, his genius continued to throw out bursts and jets of exquisite music, color, and feeling. Such, for instance, are the little pieces called "Wanting is—What?" and "Never the Time and the Place," written in his seventy-first year; and such is "Summum Bonum," written just before the pen dropped from his hand in 1889, in the seventy-seventh year of his

age. He had had to wait long for recognition, but during the latter years of his life his fame overshadowed even that of Tennyson, and his works were studied and made a cult of, with an enthusiasm seldom accorded to a living poet.

Browning's earliest poem, *Pauline*, was, he tells us, intended as the first of a series of "mono-dramatic epics," each of which was to present the "history of a soul." Broadly viewed, the whole of Browning's work is what his youthful ambition dreamed of making it. In three forms—pure drama, dramatic narrative, and dramatic lyric—he gave the history of hundreds of souls; or if not their whole history, at least some crucial moment of it, when its issues trembled in the balance and dipped toward good or evil. In his earlier life he made many attempts to present these crucial moments in regular drama intended for the stage, but the form was not perfectly suited to his peculiar task. In *Pippa Passes*, however, while keeping the dramatic form, he threw aside the demands of stage presentation, and presented four special moments of soul-history, connected with each other only by a slight thread. The germ of the poem came to him in youth, while listening to a gypsy girl singing in the Camberwell woods. He imagined some one walking alone through life, apparently too obscure to leave any trace behind, but unconsciously exercising a lasting influence at every step. This abstract conception he afterward connected with the personality of a little silk-winder in the silk-mills of Asolo, a mountain town which he had visited on his first journey to Italy. Pippa walks through Asolo on New Year's Day, her one holiday in the year, unconsciously dropping her divine songs into the lives of four groups of people, just at the moment when their fates are trembling between good and evil, courage and cowardice; and by the touching

His Interest in "Special Moments" of Soul History: Illustrated by "Pippa Passes."

purity and gladness of her voice, or by the significant words she utters, she saves each in turn. At evening she goes back to her bare room and sinks to sleep with a final song on her lips, still ignorant of the service she has done to "Asolo's happiest four."

Pippa Passes illustrates the essential qualities of Browning's dramatic genius. He cannot throw, as could Shakespeare and his fellows, large and varied groups of people together, and make them act and interact with the ceaseless play and evolution of life. Nor has he the greater Shakespearian gift—the supreme dramatic gift—of forgetting and obscuring himself. In all the words which his characters utter we seem to hear the ring of Browning's own voice; as an accompaniment to their actions there always runs, silent or expressed, his comment of blame or praise. He is less a dramatist than an exhibitor and interpreter of single dramatic situations, such as the four which are bound loosely together by Pippa's chance-heard songs. But in presenting these single situations Browning's power is absolute; here he works with the most graphic vividness, and with a compression of meaning which crowds into a few lines the implications of a lifetime.

Strength and Weakness of His Dramatic Genius.

It follows from the peculiar nature of Browning's dramatic gift that his most vital work is in his short poems, where he handles single situations or soul-states, isolated from what has gone before and from what is to come after. In these he not only selects by preference a highly special moment in the life of the man or woman whose soul he wishes to show us in its working, but as a rule he views his theme from some odd and striking point of view. Another peculiarity of Browning's method in his short poems is that he throws the reader into the midst of the theme with startling suddenness, and then

His Short Poems: Peculiarities of His Method.

proceeds to flash facet after facet of the subject on him, with a rapidity which is apt to bewilder a reader not in the secret of the method. There are no explanations, no gradual transitions; we are not allowed to guess at the whole intention until the end is reached. A capital example of this peculiarity is the "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," which has to be read to the end before we see it for what it is, the self-revealed picture of a narrow-minded, superstitious, sensual monk, stirred to hatred by a brother monk, whose mild, benignant ways and genuine piety we gradually discern through the speaker's jeers and curses. If we add to these peculiarities of method the fact that Browning's best work is very compressed in style, we see why many persons have found obscure in him what is in reality clear enough, but is not to be perceived clearly without attention and alertness on the reader's part. Perhaps the poem which best illustrates all Browning's peculiarities of method, harmoniously combined, is "My Last Duchess," a marvellous example of his power to give a whole life history, with a wealth of picturesque detail, in a few lines intensely compressed and heavily weighted with suggestion.

His Wide Dramatic Sympathy.

The range of Browning's dramatic sympathy is very great. In "Caliban upon Setebos" he has shown the grotesque imaginings of a half-human monster, groping after an explanation of the universe. In "Childe Roland" he has shown the mystical heart of mediæval knighthood, fronting spectral terrors in its search after the stronghold of sin, the Dark Tower, where lurks the enemy of life and joy. In "Abt Vogler" and "A Toccata of Galuppi's" he has touched upon the inner meanings of music, and has painted for us permanent types of the musical enthusiast. In "The Grammarian's Funeral" he has shown the poetry and heroism hidden underneath

the gray exterior of the life of a Renaissance pedant. In "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Andrea del Sarto," and "Pictor Ignotus" he has given the psychology of the painter's nature, and has flashed illumination upon the sources of success and failure in art which lie deep in the moral being of the artist. In "Balaustion's Adventure" he has revealed the inner spirit of Greek life in the fifth century before Christ. In "A Death in the Desert" he has led us into the mystical rapture of the early Christians; and in "Christmas Eve" and "Easter Day" he has approached Christian faith from the modern position. In "Saul" he has shown us, against the splendid background of patriarchal Israel, the boy David singing, in the tent of the great King, songs of human joy which rise, in a sudden opening of the heavens of prophecy, into a song of the coming of the Messiah. Nowhere out of Shakespeare can be found a mind more wide-ranging over the outer circumstances and the inner significance of man's life, or a more unwearied inquiry into its spiritual crises.

His Teaching.

Browning's poetry is intensely charged with moral purpose. The world is for him, in Keats's phrase, the "Valley of Soul-making"; and every act, thought, and feeling of life is of concern only as it hinders or determines the soul on its course. But he believes salvation to lie, not, as does Tennyson, in the suppression of individual will and passion, but in their strenuous exercise. It is the moments of high excitement in human life which interest him, because in such moments the great saving assertions of will and passion are made. Hence his interest in art, which embodies these moments of high excitement; and hence his indifference to science, which deals with impersonal law. Love, as the supreme experience and function of the soul, testing its temper and revealing its probable fate, holds the first place in his thought. In such poems as "Cristina," "Evelyn Hope," "The Last Ride Together," "My Star,"

"By the Fireside," and a multitude more, he has presented love in its varied phases and has celebrated its manifold meanings not only on earth but in the infinite range of worlds through which he believes that the soul is destined to go in search after its own perfection. By the intensity and positiveness of his doctrine he has influenced his age profoundly, and has made his name synonymous with faithfulness to the human love which life brings, and through that to the divine love which it implies and promises.

The robustness of Browning's nature, its courage, its abounding joy and faith in life, make his works a permanent storehouse of spiritual energy for the race, a storehouse to which for a long time to come it will in certain moods always return. In an age distracted by doubt and divided in will, his strong, unfaltering voice has been lifted above the perplexities and hesitations of men like a bugle-call to joyous battle in which the victory is to the brave.

One of Browning's most perfect short poems, "One Word More," is addressed to his wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806[1]–1861), and is a kind of counter-tribute to her most perfect work, the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, which contain the record of her courtship and marriage. Her early life was shadowed by illness and affliction; and her early poetry (*The Seraphim*, 1838, *Poems*, 1844) shows in many places the defects of unreality and of overwrought emotion natural to work produced in the loneliness of a sick-chamber. The best known of these early poems are perhaps "Lady Geraldine's Courtship," where she works under the influence of Tennyson's idylls, and "The Cry of the Children," where she voices the humanitarian protest against the practice of employing child-labor in mines

Mrs. Browning.

[1] Mrs. Browning's birth is usually given as 1809. We have, however, Browning's own positive statement as to the correctness of the earlier date.

and factories. After her marriage and removal to Italy her health improved, and her art greatly strengthened. The *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850) are among the noblest love-poems in the language, taking rank with Shakespeare's Sonnets and Rossetti's *House of Life* as one of the three great English sonnet-cycles. Mrs. Browning was deeply interested in the struggle of Italy to shake off her bondage to Austria, as is shown by her *Casa Guidi Windows*, published in 1851. In 1856 appeared her most ambitious work, *Aurora Leigh*, a kind of versified novel of modern English life, with a social reformer and humanitarian, of aristocratic lineage, for hero, and a young poetess, in large part a reflection of Mrs. Browning's own personality, for heroine. *Aurora Leigh* shows the influence of a great novel-writing age, when the novel was becoming more and more imbued with social purpose. It attempts to perform in verse the same social function which Dickens, George Eliot, Kingsley, and others, strove to perform in prose. The interest in public questions also appears in Mrs. Browning's *Poems before Congress* (1860), and in her *Last Poems* (1862).

Mrs. Browning's technic is uncertain, and she never freed herself from her characteristic faults of vagueness and unrestraint. But her sympathy with noble causes, the elevation and ardor of her moods of personal emotion, and the distinction of her utterance at its best, outbalance these negative considerations. She shares her husband's strenuousness and optimism, but she speaks always from the feminine vantage-ground. Her characteristic note is that of intimate, personal feeling; even *Casa Guidi Windows* has been aptly called "a woman's love-making with a nation."

Browning's robust optimism in the face of all the unsettling and disturbing forces of the age is thrown out in sharp relief, when we contrast him with a somewhat younger poet, Matthew Arnold, in whom the prevailing

tone is one of doubt and half-despairing stoicism. Arnold was born in 1822, the son of Doctor Thomas Arnold, the famous head-master of Rugby. He went up to Oxford just at the time when the religious revival, under John Keble and John Henry Newman, was stirring the university to its depths. The unsettling effect of this agitation, coming after the very different religious teaching of Rugby, had much to do with determining Arnold's characteristic attitude of mind toward questions of faith. From his thirtieth year until shortly before his death in 1888, he held the position of inspector of schools. To the demands and responsibilities of this official position were added, in 1857, those of a professorship of poetry at Oxford. These outer circumstances were largely instrumental in turning his energies away from poetry, into the field of prose criticism, where, for the last twenty years of his life, he held the position of a leader, almost of a dictator.

Matthew Arnold.

Arnold may be described as a poet of transition. His bent as a poet was taken chiefly between 1840 and 1850, the period intervening between the first and the second outburst of creative energy in the century. Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson, and Newman were, each in his way, already building anew the structures of spiritual faith and hope; but to Arnold, as to many others, the ebbing of the old wave was far more clearly felt than the rising of the new one. Standing, as he says,

Arnold a Poet of Transition.

> between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born,

he fronts life wearily, or at best stoically. He seeks consolation in the intellect; and his poetry, though penetrated with romantic sensibility, has always the intellectual self-consciousness which betrays the classical bias.

On the side of religion, Arnold's character led him to a melancholy return upon the old faiths, and to a stoical rejection of them as outworn things, "a dead time's exploded dream." He has expressed this at least twice very impressively, in "Dover Beach" and "Obermann." It is this same scepticism applied to the facts of human intercourse which breathes sadly but calmly through the series of love lyrics entitled "Switzerland." Just as he has felt compelled to surrender his faith in a personal God and a compassionate Saviour, so, as he regards the human heart and its destiny, he loses faith in the heart's promises as well. He sees the sad instability of mortal affection rather than its heroic constancy; he is pierced by a sense of the inevitable loneliness of each human soul. The imperfections and unrealized ideals of life, in which Tennyson found cause to "faintly trust the larger hope," and in which Browning saw the "broken arcs" of heaven's "perfect round," Arnold made a reason for doubt, declaring that men should put away delusion and expect in the future only what they see in the past. Other phases of this stoic dejection, and of the struggle which it wages with the restless craving for joy, are to be studied in the pieces called "Self-Dependence" and "A Summer Night."

His Attitude Toward Life.

For his ideal of form, Arnold went resolutely to the literature of Greece, abjuring romantic wilfulness and vagueness in favor of classic lucidity and restraint. When he works more deliberately in the Greek spirit and manner, his style is often cold and dry. In his long poems, especially, he is apt to sacrifice too much to his reverence for classical tradition. Only one of them, "Sohrab and Rustum," combines classic purity of style with romantic ardor of feeling. The truth of its oriental color, the deep pathos of the situation, the fire and intensity of the action, the strong conception of character, and the full, solemn

His Ideal of Form.

music of the verse, make "Sohrab and Rustum" unquestionably the masterpiece among Arnold's longer poems. The same unity of classic form with romantic feeling characterizes his two shorter masterpieces, "The Scholar Gypsy" and "Thyrsis," which are crystal-clear without coldness, and restrained without loss of a full volume of power.

His Desertion of Poetry for Prose.

Arnold was not able, in his poetry, to live through the period of dejection and doubt, and to follow to their mature issues such hints of hope and faith as his poems show. Not even in "Thyrsis," the beautiful threnody in which he celebrated his dead friend Clough, has he found it possible to embrace any but the most shadowy consolation. In "Obermann Once More" he does, indeed, for a moment emerge into something like optimism; but when that piece was written his work as a poet was done. He seems to have felt that the practical work to which he was called of regenerating society and reforming public faith could be better done in prose. He became a critic of poetry, of society, and of religion.

Arnold's Prose.

Arnold saw more clearly than Carlyle or Tennyson the situation of the modern world in the face of the immense mass of new knowledge—the result of scientific discovery—and the vast increase of "people who counted"—the result of democracy. The first threatened to sweep away old bases of belief and morality; the second threatened to overwhelm civilization and social control, which had hitherto been the function of the upper class. Arnold's own profession, that of inspector of schools in the national system of education, brought him into practical contact with the situation. So, from 1860 on, he devoted himself chiefly to the writing of essays, in a style more urbane than Carlyle's but equally full of purpose. He dealt with society itself in the papers composing *Culture and Anarchy*

(1869); with the effect of scientific criticism on man's attitude toward the Bible and Christian faith, in *Literature and Dogma* (1873); and with the values of literature of the past to modern life in *Essays in Criticism*. (First Series 1865, Second Series 1888.)

Arnold's social message was more definite than Carlyle's gospel of work and hero-worship, though perhaps no easier for the mass of men to follow. It is expressed in his often-used term "culture," which he defines as "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world." It is easy to see that this idea of total perfection in life is in harmony with Arnold's classical ideal in poetry, an ideal of symmetry, of subordination of parts to whole. Carlyle had preached the value of conduct, the "Hebraic" element in life; Arnold set himself to preach the value of the complementary "Hellenic" element—open-mindedness, delight in ideas, alertness to entertain new points of view, and willingness to examine life constantly in the light of new postulates. Wherever in religion, politics, education, or literature he saw his countrymen under the domination of narrow ideals, he came speaking the mystic word of deliverance, "culture." It is by culture that the Puritan dissenter shall be made to see the lack of elevation and beauty in his church forms; that the radical politician shall reach a saving sense of the rawness and vulgarity of his programme of state; that the man whose literary taste is bad shall be admitted into the true kingdom of letters. In almost all of his prose writing he attacks some form of "Philistinism," by which word he characterized the narrow-mindedness and self-satisfaction of the British middle class.

His "Gospel of Ideas."

Just as Arnold was concerned with the problem of assimilating the masses into the civilization of the future,

so also was he engaged in the task of assimilating new knowledge into the intellectual and moral life of mankind.

Arnold's Religious and Literary Criticism.

The place of science in the education of the future he considered in "Literature and Science" (in *Discourses in America*). He wrote several books to show how the scientific criticism of the Bible left untouched the essentials of Christianity—the conception of God as a power "not ourselves which makes for righteousness," of the Hebrews; "the secret of Jesus," that "the kingdom of heaven lies within you." But perhaps his heart was most entirely in his essays in literary criticism. As professor of poetry at Oxford (1857–1867) his lectures dealt with important themes, such as "Celtic Literature" and "Translating Homer." He pointed out the value and methods of the study of poetry, and the peculiar contribution of poets like Wordsworth, Byron, and Keats to man's sense for beauty, which, with the sense for conduct and the sense for knowledge, makes up the sense for total perfection. Arnold is a more authoritative critic than any other of his day. He inherited classical standards and æsthetic methods of judgment, but on the whole he felt the function of criticism to be largely one of selection and interpretation. He defined it as "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world," and thus emphasized its importance in the attainment of culture, both personal and social.

The total impression which Arnold makes in his prose may be described as that of a spiritual man-of-the-world.

His "Post-Romantic" Point of View.

In comparison with Carlyle, Ruskin, and Newman, he is worldly. For the romantic passion and mystic vision of these men he substitutes an ideal of balanced cultivation, the ideal of the trained, sympathetic, cosmopolitan gentleman. He marks a return to the conventions of life after the storm and stress of the romantic age. Yet in

his own way he also was a prophet and a preacher, striving whole-heartedly to release his countrymen from bondage to mean things, and pointing their gaze to that symmetry and balance of character which has seemed to many noble minds the true goal of human endeavor.

The name of Arthur Hugh Clough (1819–1861) will always be associated with that of Matthew Arnold by reason of the threnody, *Thyrsis*. Clough was at Rugby with Arnold, and at Oxford, during the years of Newman's influence, and his serious nature was stirred to its depths by the movement. He was, however, of too sceptical a nature to yield to authority in religion, and as the result of his intellectual honesty he resigned his fellowship, and after an attempt to settle in America, he became an examiner in the Education Office. He died in 1861.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

Clough's case is typical of that of young men of the day whose sense of the actual world and of the new scientific standards of truth made romanticism in life or in religion impossible for them. Like many of his contemporaries he was much influenced by Carlyle. He was a genuine poet, but the spiritual conflict in which he lived prevented him from undertaking any large production. His longest poem is *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* (1848), the love-story, in hexameter verse, of an Oxford scholar and a girl in a Highland village or bothie, who is lovely to him as she appears doing the hard necessary field work of the farm. Through her he feels the attraction of reality, and abandoning his conventional academic career, he emigrates to New Zealand. Clough's most notable poems are lyrics which express, sometimes, almost scornfully, his refusal to rest in conventional beliefs, sometimes his yearning for spiritual rest of some sort. But his clearest note is one of confidence in life and in the spirit of man, sounded most buoyantly in "Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth."

The dictatorship of taste which Arnold held in matters of literature, was held in matters of art by John Ruskin; who also broadened his criticism, as did Arnold, into the region of social and moral ideals. His nature was a more ardent one than Arnold's; and his crusade against bad art, as well as against social and moral falsehood, partook of the Hebraic intensity of Carlyle, whose disciple, indeed, he acknowledged himself to be. He was born in 1819. His father, a London wine-merchant of wealth and liberal tastes, gave him every early advantage of education and travel. Family carriage trips through England, France, and Switzerland enabled him to gather those impressions of landscape beauty and of architectural effect, which he afterward put to remarkable use in his critical writings. A boyish enthusiasm for the paintings of William Turner ripened with years into an ardent championship of that wonderful artist, then obscure and neglected. In the first volume of *Modern Painters*, published in his twenty-fourth year, Ruskin enshrined Turner as the greatest of English landscape-painters. In doing so, however, his powers of analysis led him deep into the abstract theory of art; and in the remainder of the work, published at intervals during the next sixteen years, he examined many types and schools of painting, separating what he held to be true from what he held to be false, with haughty and uncompromising assurance. Meanwhile, in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *Stones of Venice* (1851–1853), he made a similar examination of the principal types of European architecture, and attempted to establish similar underlying principles concerning their growth and decay, their worth and worthlessness. Many of Ruskin's judgments must of course be dissented from, but it cannot be questioned that in his writings art criticism was put for the first time upon a broad philosophic basis. He believed

Ruskin: His Early Life and Art Criticism.

the springs of art to lie deep in the moral nature of the artist, and in the moral temper of the age and nation which produced him. Latent or expressed, this is the pervading idea of all Ruskin's art criticism. By insistence upon this view, by eloquent illustration and fiery defense of it, he gradually led his readers to a new understanding of the spiritual meaning of art, and awakened them to a new discrimination.

In 1860, at forty years of age, Ruskin finished *Modern Painters*, and practically closed that series of works which had made him the foremost art critic of the century. From this time on he used art mainly as illustration and text, by means of which to enforce some ethical, economic, or religious lesson. He became more and more absorbed in the problems of socialism, being led thereto by the conviction at which he had arrived in his previous work, that all great art must be national and social, and must spring from healthy and beautiful conditions of life in the society where it arises. Modern art he held to be, with a few exceptions, debased; and he gradually came to believe that this debasement was due to our commercial organization of society. In two books, *Unto This Last* (1861) and *Munera Pulveris* (1862), he protested against the received theories of political economy. Wealth, for instance, he conceived to consist in *real* values as opposed to *exchange* values—in Tintoretto's damaged frescos in Venice as against the lithographs sold along the rue de Rivoli in Paris. Indeed, he held that the latter city was in effect so much the poorer because of the cost which had gone into the production of such intrinsically worthless things. Further, he held that the question between capital and labor is a moral question, and that the capitalist should be led to use his power, not to tax more and more heavily the labor of others, but to make them more independent. In short, he held that the aim

Later Life: Ethical and Economic Teaching.

of political economy, in distinction from "commercial economy," was "the multiplication of human life at the highest standard."

"Sesame and Lilies."

His most popular book, *Sesame and Lilies* (1865) was in part a side-product of his thinking on political economy. In the first division of the book, entitled "King's Treasuries," he holds up to censure England's absorption in worldly success, as opposed to spiritual success. To the "gospel of getting on," which depends for its appealing power upon the idea that money constitutes the only real "value," he opposes the gospel of spiritual wealth, especially as deposited in books, those King's Treasuries which are the real centre of the realm of "value." The second part, "Queen's Gardens," is Ruskin's contribution to the "woman problem" of the century, the theme being the same as that of Tennyson's *Princess*. *Sesame and Lilies* is written in a style of wonderful strength and richness. It affords perhaps the best single example of its author's mastery over the manifold chords of prose expression.

His Last Years.

As he went on in years, Ruskin's sympathy went out more and more to the oppressed and unjustly treated of this world; and he spent a large part of his time and energy in attempting to help the working classes by word and deed. To them he addressed a series of letters entitled *Fors Clavigera*,[1] beginning in 1871, which contain his views on economic, artistic, and religious subjects set forth sometimes with the most winning persuasion, and sometimes with furious invective. In 1875 he formed a society afterward called the Guild of Saint George, in which he attempted to carry into practical form his own economic and social ideals, with a large admixture of the spiritual qualities of

[1] Ruskin points out that *Fors Clavigera* may mean Strength as Club-bearer, Strength as Key-bearer, or Strength as Nail-bearer, and that the title metaphorically suggests Strength of Deed, of Patience, and of Law.

Carlyle. The vows of the guild enforced the virtues of obedience, industry, and unselfishness in a form suggesting knighthood. The order was, in fact, an attempt to restore a mediæval society through the diffusion of the ideals of chivalry among its members—to realize a Utopia on English soil. To this guild, and to other experiments in housing and teaching the poor, he gave ultimately all his fortune. The terrible burden of arousing England to a sense of its responsibility in the face of monstrous social injustice weighed more and more heavily upon him. Attacks of brain fever interrupted his work, and in the intervals of mental darkness he wrote *Præterita*, a lovely and naïve account of his boyhood and youth. During his last years he lived at Brantwood among the English lakes, and there he died in 1900.

His Style.

Ruskin combined many gifts and qualities: a subtle intellect, a nervous system which vibrated intensely to impressions of beauty and ugliness, great moral ardor, marked impatience and dogmatism, and a marvellous power of prose expression. His style is based on the prose of the English Bible, modified by the religious writers of the seventeenth century, especially by the florid style of Jeremy Taylor; and it is enriched by a unique gift of description, lyrical in movement and splendid in color. His best descriptive passages, for example the famous dithyramb on Saint Mark's Cathedral in *Stones of Venice*, that on the Falls of Schaffhausen, in *Modern Painters*, or that on the Rhone at Geneva, in *Præterita*, are among the capital examples of ornate prose in English. His style is as markedly romantic, in its emotional quality and its search after beauty, as Arnold's is classical in its subordination of emotion to intellect, and in its effort to secure clearness at any cost.

One of the important services of Ruskin as art critic was to defend to the public a group of young men who sought to bring back technical sincerity and spiritual

truth to the arts of painting and poetry. They found models for these qualities in the painters and poets before Raphael, who had treated the most mystical religious themes with simple-hearted realism, and thus called themselves Preraphaelites. For subjects, as well as for inspiration, the Preraphaelites went back to the Middle Age. A mystical and intangible beauty of conception, together with a kind of naïve earnestness and simplicity of treatment, characterized their work both in painting and poetry. The founder of the Preraphaelite Brotherhood was Dante Gabriel Rossetti; the first members were Londoners, like himself; but some of the most enthusiastic recruits of the Brotherhood were Oxford men, who saw in it an attempt to do in art and literature what Newman had tried to do in the church. In this way the Preraphaelite Movement is the child and heir of the Oxford Movement.

The Preraphaelite Movement.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti was born in London in 1828. His father was an Italian patriot and exile; his mother of mixed English and Italian blood. In 1848 he definitely adopted the career of painter, and in the same year founded the Preraphaelite Brotherhood. Before 1850 he had produced such pictures as "The Girlhood of Mary" and "The Annunciation," which are representative of the early principles of the order. In that year the Brotherhood founded a little magazine called *The Germ*, which, though it ran for only four numbers, is famous as containing the poem which best illustrates the movement on its literary side, "The Blessed Damozel."

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

The Blessed Damozel, wearing the "white rose of Mary's gift," and holding the mystic lilies, leans from the "gold bar of heaven," yearning for her earthly lover, and picturing to herself the time when she shall lead him with her among the celestial groves and by the living waters of God. The sights

"The Blessed Damozel."

and sounds of heaven are imaged forth in the poem with a concreteness which would be startling if it were not so solemnized by spiritual meaning and so freighted with spiritual awe. From time to time, as the poem progresses, our minds are led out from among the shadowy landscapes and the indwelling spirits of paradise, down through illimitable star spaces, to where upon earth the lover sits, hearing in the autumnal rustle of the leaves the feet of his beloved, as she tries to reach him down the echoing stairs of the sky. Besides the touching emotion of the poem, the wonderful beauty and reach of its imagery, it has a melody sweeter and more sensitive than Rossetti ever attained afterward.

The union of simplicity and concreteness with spirituality, which makes this poem typical of the Preraphaelite aims in both poetry and painting, appears equally in another early poem of Rossetti's, "My Sister's Sleep." The strained stillness and suspense of a death-chamber, the anguish and holy fortitude of a mother in the presence of her loss, are given with passionate reserve and tender realism.

A considerable portion of Rossetti's verse was written in his early life, but only a few poems were then published. In his thirty-second year he married a Miss Siddall, whose rare type of beauty he has immortalized in the best-known of his pictures, the "Beata Beatrix." Two years after the marriage his wife died; and in despair at his loss, Rossetti placed in her coffin all his unpublished writings. They remained buried until 1869, when they were exhumed by his friends and published the following year. This volume of 1870, another published eleven years after, and a volume of translations from the early Italian poets, entitled *Dante and His Circle*, constitute the whole of Rossetti's poetical output. After his wife's death he withdrew more and more into himself, until he became a com-

Later Life and Poetry.

plete recluse. Intense brooding upon his loss, added to the disastrous effects of the drug which he took as a relief from insomnia, made his life a tragedy only relieved by the creative play of his mind, which continued to embody itself in pictures and poems of strange and sometimes morbid beauty. He died in 1882.

Rossetti's work illustrates perfectly the romantic tendency of escape from the actual world. This tendency appears in his long poems in ballad form, "Sister Helen," "The Bride's Prelude," "Rose Mary," "The King's Tragedy." More subtly is it evident in such studies of love as "The Stream's Secret" and "Love's Nocturne," where the poet strives to penetrate to the innermost and essential secret of that mysterious passion which swayed his life as it did that of his great name-poet Dante, but to such tragic destiny. The great memorial of this love is the sonnet sequence, *The House of Life*. This in the final form which it took in the volume of 1881 consists of one hundred and one sonnets dealing with the poet's love-history and loss in a manner so intricate and involved that the passion seems a dream—of marvellous intensity and realism, it is true—and the object of it a ghost and no mortal woman. Love to Browning was a constructive and unifying force; to Rossetti it was destructive, disintegrating, tending by the very real power of its alchemy to make man less real in his strength of personality and control of life.

Rossetti's Romanticism.

As a whole, Rossetti's poetry is marked by a great picturesqueness and visual beauty. It is "painter's poetry," in that its appeal is constantly to the eye. Music it has, too, but the tendency to load itself with elaborate detail often defeats the music, and makes of the verse a kind of poetical tapestry, stiff with emblazoned images. Where it is not the poetry of a painter it is the poetry of a prisoner and a recluse. Outdoor nature, the common life of men, appear in it

Rossetti's Poetic Style.

seldom. In the main, its atmosphere is close and heavily perfumed, its emotion somewhat morbid and cloying. It is the poetry of a nature born for the generous sunlight and color of Italy, and compelled to build a dream-world amid the chill fog and bitter smoke of London.

In the earlier pictures of Rossetti appears the noble, serious face of his sister Christina (1832–1894), who sat as his model for the youthful Madonna. She also contributed several lyrics to *The Germ*. Apart from her personal association with the Preraphaelites, however, she holds a place of her own in English poetry. Her longer poems, *Goblin Market* and *The Prince's Progress*, appeared in 1862 and 1866. These as well as her lyrics show the lovely and naïve simplicity which was the essence of Preraphaelitism. As a religious poet she is the opposite of Clough. Christina Rossetti was assured of her Anglican-Catholic faith; to it she gave up her life, with love and its promise of earthly happiness. Her poetry, both of love and religion, is, therefore, born of experience and has the truth of sacrifice.

Christina Rossetti.

One of the young Oxford men who was drawn to Rossetti by kinship in interests was William Morris (1834–1896). Indeed, before his acquaintance with Rossetti and the London group, he and his friends, conspicuous among whom was the painter Edward Burne-Jones, were showing the influence of the Oxford Movement, and were absorbed in mediæval feeling and study of religious architecture and literature. In 1856 Morris at his own expense established *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, in which appeared some of Rossetti's poems, as well as his own. These last by 1858 had grown into a volume which he called *The Defense of Guenevere*, from the opening poem in which the sinful Queen throws back her hair from her cheek of flame to tell Sir Gawaine and his knights that they lie. It is clear from this first poem that we are in a

William Morris: Early Poems.

different world from that of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. Here there is no note of modern meaning—only an attempt to give in utter sincerity the psychology and the sentiment of the mediæval soul. Most of the poems deal with a later epoch than that of King Arthur, especially the fourteenth century and the great wars between the English and French. In "The Eve of Crecy" and "The Gilliflower of Gold" Morris touches on the joyous adventure of knighthood; in "Shameful Death" and "The Haystack in the Floods" he dwells on the darker sides of mediæval life, its violence and terrible ferocity; in "Sir Peter Harpdon's End" he gives a story of devotion of the knight who holds his castle for the English until he is taken and put to death. In "The Sailing of the Sword," "The Blue Closet," and "The Wind" he presents aspects purely picturesque and fanciful, sometimes mere flashes of color.

"The Earthly Paradise."

Nine years later (1867) Morris published his second volume of poetry, *The Life and Death of Jason*. It is in striking contrast to the first. We seem to emerge from a forest full of grotesque and terrible things upon a plain bright with sunshine; we pass from the world of the Holy Grail to the world of the Golden Fleece. And yet the treatment of the myth is mediæval in that the poem is written in the same diffuse, soft-colored, gently flowing verse in which the Norman-French *trouvères* had sung the adventures of their knights and paladins. Shortly after *The Life and Death of Jason* Morris published the first part of a collection of similar tales, called *The Earthly Paradise*, which he completed in 1871. In this volume the narratives are held together by an ingenious scheme, analogous to that which Chaucer used in binding together his Canterbury Tales. A band of Northmen, sailing westward in their viking ships, are cast ashore upon the Island of Atlantis, the earthly paradise of which the Greek poets

dreamed. Here they find dwelling a fortunate race of men, who in times long past have come hither from Greece and Asia Minor. The newcomers remain through the changing seasons of a year, telling stories of their northern land, of "The Lovers of Gudrun" and "The Fostering of Aslaug," and listening to the tales which the islanders have brought from their ancient home, of "Atalanta's Race" and "The Love of Alcestis." But whatever are the sources of the stories, whether classical, northern, or oriental, the style in which they are written is always that of the mediæval romances; even the metres employed are those familiar to Chaucer and the French *trouvères*. The philosophy, on the contrary, is pagan, with the pessimism peculiar to the Greek as he thought on the passing of youth and the brevity of life. Death is the motive of the whole poem. The fear of death drives the wanderers forth on their voyage in search of the earthly paradise; it appears in every tale. King Admetus would be happy but

> That all those pageants soon should be passed by,
> And hid by night the fair spring blossoms lie.

Gregory, in "The Land East of the Sun," falls thinking

> Of what a rude and friendless place
> The world was; through what empty days
> Men were pushed slowly down to death.

At best life is

> A checkered day of sunshine and of flowers,
> Fading to twilight and dark night at last.

In this pessimism Morris reflected the mood which was spreading over England, as the result of the loss of the consolations of religious faith, and of the doubt of social reform to deal with the increasing misery of the poor—a

mood from which no romantic device could completely escape.

Literature was with Morris only one of many activities. His was a life of ceaseless labor in many fields of industry.

Morris's Industrial Career. He began life as an architect, abandoned this career for painting, drifted at length into the designing and manufacturing of furniture, wall-paper, and textile fabrics, and toward the close of his life turned his exhaustless energy into artistic printing and bookbinding. He worked always in the spirit of a mediæval master-craftsman, to whom beauty and honesty of workmanship were a religion. His sincerity, versatility, and skill made an epoch in the history of household decoration; and as the impulse given by him has broadened and popularized itself, the surroundings of ordinary domestic life have been beautified for multitudes. With all this business and industrial life he continued to produce literature as a by-product, for, as he said: "If a chap can't compose an epic poem while he's weaving a tapestry he's no good at all." He gave a version of Sigurd the Volsung, and translated other northern stories, including Beowulf, as well as Virgil and Homer. Late in his life he produced a series of romances, in poetic prose, dealing with the primitive life of our northern ancestors; the most notable are perhaps *The House of the Wolfings*, *The Roots of the Mountains*, and *The Story of the Glittering Plain*. In them he succeeded in importing into English literature the spirit of the northern saga, not, to be sure, without some artificiality, but nevertheless with great picturesqueness and romantic charm.

Prose-Romances.

His Socialism. Morris's industrial experiences gradually led him to the conviction that the bases of modern commercialism were false, and he threw himself with heart and soul into the socialistic movement then beginning to gain headway in England. Two

of his romances, *News from Nowhere* and *The Dream of John Ball*, are attempts to imagine a new organization of society; and some of his later poems are chants of prophecy and hope for the longed-for era of social justice. In the prelude to *The Earthly Paradise* he calls himself "the idle singer of an empty day"; but this "idle singer" was a man who spent the greater portion of his time and strength working in shop and designing-room to make the world as it is a more livable place, and who, as experience thus gained gave him prompting, tried with all earnestness to indicate what seemed to him a higher basis for the social life of man.

The pessimism which has been spoken of as characteristic of the concluding decades of the century finds most poignant utterance in the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, by Edward Fitzgerald (1809–1883). Although this is called a translation, it is really an original poem, based on the scattered fragments of the old astronomer-poet of Persia, who lived in the twelfth century. Fitzgerald published his poem in 1859, but sold only a few copies. He continued to revise and enlarge it through several editions, and lived to see it one of the most widely read books of the day. It popularized orientalism as the Preraphaelite Movement had popularized mediævalism; it expressed in memorable form the questionings in regard to the worth of life which were being asked more insistently. In its frank acceptance of pleasure as the only justification and alleviation of life, it prepared the way for a sort of neo-paganism, in which the final effort to escape from the burdens and problems of society, and from the moral seriousness with which most of the Victorian writers came to face them, found voice.

The "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam."

This last phase of romanticism is illustrated in the early poetry of Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837–1909). Swinburne was at Oxford in 1857, and had some per-

sonal association with the Preraphaelites, but his genius was too eclectic to permit him to confine himself to one school. In 1864 he published his first experiment in classical tragedy, *Atalanta in Calydon*. Two years later he brought out the first series of *Poems and Ballads*. In these he deliberately and indeed ostentatiously repudiated those standards of feeling and conduct which the modern world cherishes as its hardest-won heritage from nineteen centuries of Christianity. He went back for his inspiration to paganism, and too often not to the vigorous early periods of paganism, but to its later ones, when men, callous or indifferent to the moral issues of life, sought to lose themselves in feverish self-indulgence, or in the quietism of pessimism; grateful

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

> That no life lives forever,
> That dead men rise up never,
> That even the weariest river
> Winds somewhere safe to sea.

This neopagan side, however, is but one of many in Swinburne's work. He, like Tennyson and Browning, is an eclectic, drawing material from every storehouse. More than any other poet does he take his themes and inspiration directly from literature. He has expressed his literary judgments not only in prose criticism but in verse, in his memorial poems on the French romanticists, Charles Baudelaire and Théophile Gautier, as well as his sonnets on the Elizabethan playwrights, in which often the quality of the man, obscure save for his work, is flashed in an unforgettable impression. His fondness for such extreme and morbid types of romanticism belongs to Swinburne's quality of decadence. It was in part, however, their love of freedom and their youthful impatience of control that at-

Swinburne's Themes.

tracted him to his literary idols. No one has surpassed him in his praise of Shelley, or of Marlowe—

> With mouth of gold, and morning in his eyes.

Of political freedom and hatred of tyranny he has sung gloriously. Perhaps this ideal of freedom is in part responsible for his love of the sea, the poetry of which he has given with unexampled beauty and force. Apart from the sea, his view of nature is usually morbid, dwelling on aspects of decay and death. On the other hand, he has an exquisite perception of the beauty and pathos of child-life. Besides his voluminous lyrical work, he has essayed epic narrative in *Tristram of Lyonesse;* and he has produced a number of dramas, some, like *Chastelard* and *Marino Faliero,* being studies in the Elizabethan manner, others, as *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Erechtheus,* being written on the Greek model.

His Verse Mastery.

Whatever may be the intellectual or moral value of Swinburne's poetry, it is certain that as a technical master of verse, as a musician in words, he is very great. Especially in the more rapid and impetuous rhythms he has shown himself able to push out the boundaries of his art, and to enter regions of verse-music unknown before. For a union of "splendor and speed" his poetic style is unequalled by any other poet of the Victorian age. His faults are those of mannerism and device, of diffuseness and over-ornamentation, of a tendency to clothe trivial thoughts in sweeping and resounding phrase.

"Atalanta in Calydon."

His excellences are present in the highest degree, and his faults almost absent, in his masterpiece, *Atalanta in Calydon*, which ranks almost on a level with the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton as an attempt to give in English verse the essential form and spirit of Greek drama. The subject of Swinburne's

poem is the hunting of the wild boar in Calydon, the love of Meleager for the maiden-huntress Atalanta, and his death at the hands of his mother. The action moves with stately swiftness, in obedience to the strict canons of Greek form; the pathos is deep and genuine; and the music, especially in the choruses, is splendid in range and sweep.

Walter Pater.

Walter Horatio Pater (1839–1894) represents the eclectic nature of the time in a more conscious mingling of elements, classical and romantic, Christian and pagan. Pater was an Oxford man, a fellow of Brazenose College, where he spent much of his life in seclusion from the busy world and occupied with questions of beauty and taste. His first volume, *The Renaissance* (1873), is a series of studies of significant figures in that movement, Leonardo da Vinci, Sandro Botticelli, Joachim du Bellay, and others. Another group of critical essays he collected in *Appreciations* (1889), which contains studies of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Rossetti, and others. Pater's criticism is frankly impressionistic in that he is satisfied to record his own reaction to works of art; his delicate sensitiveness to beauty in all forms makes these studies most subtly penetrating and illuminating. Pater used fiction as well as criticism, but fiction of a classical restraint, to be compared with Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*. In *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) he gives us the life of a Roman youth in the age of the Antonines — an exquisite picture — and in *Imaginary Portraits* (1887) he sketches four figures which suggest the individual character and atmosphere of different periods and countries. His interest in classical studies showed itself further in *Plato and Platonism* (1893) and *Greek Studies* (1895), essays collected after his death.

Although Pater's own work is classical in restraint and finish, he was hospitable to the romantic point

of view. Indeed his penetrating search for rare and strange forms of beauty delighted in the romantic qualities and aspects of classical life and art, and in the classical elements in romantic periods. The Renaissance as the meeting-point of the two tendencies was peculiarly fascinating to him. Similar is his attitude toward the mingling of paganism and Christianity. In *Marius the Epicurean* he pictures most sympathetically the youthful Christianity in the age of Marcus Aurelius; in "Denys l'Auxerrois" (*Imaginary Portraits*) he portrays the instinctive return to paganism in the early Renaissance. His philosophy of life is a scientific paganism. In the concluding chapter of *The Renaissance* he finds that physical life is a constantly changing combination of natural elements, "phosphorus, and lime, and delicate fibres," and that the mental life also is a group of impressions, "unstable, flickering, inconsistent . . . all that is actual in it being a single moment . . . of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is." Such being the case, then, the true use of these moments is to make each yield the most poignant and exquisite sensation of which it is capable. "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us—for that moment only." This is pure paganism—a philosophic expression of "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." But it is to be noted that Pater makes the final test of a life so lived and trained in appreciation of this world, the Christian one of willingness to sacrifice it. Marius lays down his life that his Christian friend Cornelius may escape; Sebastian van Storck (*Imaginary Portraits*) dies to save an unknown child. These are, however, not examples of the Christian doctrine that "he who loseth his

Pater's Philosophy of Life.

life for my sake shall find it," but rather fulfilments of the pagan conception in which the last exquisite sensation and noble emotion of a life consists in giving up that life for others.

CHAPTER XV

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE NOVEL

The novel of the nineteenth century is broader and more complex than that of the eighteenth, by virtue of the greater breadth and complexity of the life which it has essayed to picture. The three departments of fiction, the romance, the realistic study of manners, and the story with a purpose, persist, but the range of each is vastly extended. The increase in knowledge of the past and of strange lands, which the century has brought, has thrown open to the romanticist two great sources of material. The extension of the reading public, and the growth of curiosity concerning the circumstances of man's life under varying conditions, have caused the realistic novel to widen its scope. The world of fiction in the eighteenth century is a small one; its characters are, with a few notable exceptions, drawn from the leisure class and its dependents; they have usually no business in life beyond carrying on the action of the story. But in the nineteenth century we have novels which deal specifically with the life of the sea, the army, crime, sport, commerce, toil, politics, and the church; and with the special difficulties, dangers, and temptations which each career involves. Finally, the deeper thought of the century, bearing fruit in rapid social changes, has given to the novel of purpose greater dignity and power. The attempt to reform government and institutions, the labor movement of which Chartism was one manifestation, the so-called conflict between science and faith, all have been reflected in novels, and have been in turn influenced by them. As the novel has thus

The Novel in the Nineteenth Century.

gained in general scope, the three departments of fiction have lost in large measure their exclusive character. The romancer, in using material gathered in study or travel, has come to have something of the conscientiousness of the realist. The realist has found romantic possibilities in actual life; the advance of science, leading to startling discoveries in the physical and mental world, has given him means of arousing wonder and terror, more effective than those afforded by gothic machinery. And finally the novelist with a purpose has found in the realistic picture of things as they are one of the most potent forces of revolution.

Maria Edgeworth.

The work of Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849) forms an interesting link between the novel of the eighteenth century and that of the nineteenth. She was a follower of Miss Burney in the effort to paint contemporary society. Like her predecessor, she shared in the rather shallow social purpose of the eighteenth century; her general aim, as set forth in the introduction to her novel *Patronage* (1814), "the inculcation of simplicity and morality in an artificial and recklessly frivolous age," is one which Addison would have applauded. But her purpose is often more definite than this; and in several particulars her work suggests the course which the novel was to take in the future. Her long residence in Ireland interested her in social conditions in that island, and she wrote earnestly to improve them. *The Absentee* (1812) is both a satire against the Irish landlord who ruins himself in London society and a moving picture of the evils which his folly brings on his native land. In Ireland, too, Miss Edgeworth had an opportunity to study life in what to her readers were remote conditions. Her first and best story, the little masterpiece called *Castle Rackrent* (1800), is the account of the fortunes of a decaying family, as seen through the shrewd eyes and told by the witty Irish tongue of an old servant.

It has the distinction of having suggested to Sir Walter Scott that true local color could be made as effective a background as false, and that the romantic interest could be united with an effort to portray life as it is.

Jane Austen.

The wide range of Miss Edgeworth's work emphasizes by contrast the narrow field occupied by Jane Austen (1775–1817), whose novels deal with life in the country, where the traditions of the eighteenth century lingered undisturbed. In Miss Austen's case, as earlier in Fielding's and later in Thackeray's, the realistic impulse was in part a reaction from romantic or sentimental views of life, and first expressed itself as burlesque. Two of her early stories, *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility*, she wrote with the obvious purpose of opposing to the impossible situations and strained emotions of Mrs. Radcliffe and her school a humorously sensible picture of life and love as they are. From the outset Miss Austen limited her view to the world that she knew, and the influences that she saw at work. She was the daughter of a clergyman, and except for an occasional visit to a watering-place like Bath or Lyme, she spent her youth in a country parish. Her acquaintance included county families, clergymen, and naval officers—for her brothers were in the navy. The chief business of these people, as Miss Austen saw them, was attention to social duties; and their chief interest was matrimony. This world Miss Austen represents in her novels; outside of it she never steps. And even in this petty world she takes account chiefly of its pettiness. The great things of life, passion, and moral purpose, the interests of the artist, the lover, the saint, may as well be presented on a small stage as on a large one, as well amid the society of a cathedral city as in London; but these things did not enter into Miss Austen's experience, and she had no great insight or imaginative sympathy to carry her beyond her own observation. There is scarcely any feeling for ex-

ternal nature in her stories, except in *Persuasion*, the latest of them. There is little passion; the language of emotion is usually forced and conventional. "Sense is the foundation on which everything good may be based," she says in *Sense and Sensibility*. Her view of evil is superficial. One suspects that her estimate of life was not very different from that expressed by Mr. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice:* "For what do we live but to make sport for our neighbors and to laugh at them in our turn?"

Her Limitations.

But if her range was thus limited, within it she was supreme. Absolutely sure of her material, undistracted by external interests, she wrote with a singular freedom from uncertainty; and her novels have, in consequence, an exactness of structure and a symmetry of form which are to be found more often in French literature than in English. Of this precision *Pride and Prejudice* is an admirable example. There the plot is the chief interest; simple, but pervading the entire book; controlling every incident, but itself depending for its outcome upon the development or revelation of the principal characters. Surrounding these characters is the world of provincial folk which Miss Austen handled with such brilliancy—cynical Mr. Bennet and his fatuous wife; Mary Bennet the pedant, and Lydia the flirt; Mr. Collins the type of pretentious conceit, and Sir William Lucas of feeble dulness. These "humors" Miss Austen develops chiefly in speech, by her wonderful faculty of saying the thing that belongs to the character at the moment. Not only is the proper sentiment caught, but the turn of phrase, the manner, almost the modulation of the voice. Not only is this true of the limited characters who react always in the same way; in the sustained scenes also between the more developed persons, where the dialogue is more highly charged, Miss Austen shows dramatic power of the highest order. One of the

Her Excellence.

best of these scenes is that between Elizabeth Bennet and Lady Catherine de Burgh, in which Elizabeth like a good swordsman, light on her feet and ever ready, completely disarms her lumbering opponent. Miss Austen's later stories, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*, are longer and slightly more elaborate than *Pride and Prejudice*, but in them the essentials of her art are still the same; a well-defined story, growing naturally out of the influence of character on character, and developed in the midst of a society full of the mild humors of provincial life.

Miss Austen shows to the full the realist's tendency to accept the world in an ironical spirit, and to find in it such amusement as it offers. The romantic impulse to seek for enjoyment in a world of greater interest or of greater opportunity for imagination, is brilliantly represented in the works of the greatest of English romancers, Sir Walter Scott.

Sir Walter Scott.

Scott began his career as a novelist late in life. It was not until he was forty-three that, finding his vogue as a poet diminishing before Byron's popularity, he finished a tale that he had begun some nine years before. This was published anonymously in 1814 under the name *Waverley*, a title which was applied to the long series of novels which followed. Some of these, like *Guy Mannering* (1815), *Old Mortality* (1816), *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818), deal with Scotland; others, like *Ivanhoe* (1820), *Kenilworth* (1821), *The Fortunes of Nigel* (1822), are concerned with English history; several, like *Quentin Durward* (1823) and *The Talisman* (1825), transfer the scene to the Continent. In 1826 a printing-house, of which Scott was a member, failed for £117,000, the whole of which debt he felt bound to assume. He wrote his latest books to get money to discharge this obligation, and had actually paid more than half when he died in 1832. The rest was paid by the sale of the copyrights on his earlier books.

Scott's life was a blending of the old and the new. He tried to be both a feudal lord and a modern business man, and both attempts are curiously connected with his literary career. He wrote partly for the pleasure of creating in fiction the feudal ideal that he sought to realize in his life at Abbotsford, partly for the money with which to sustain that experiment. Part of his success in his own day must be accounted for by the fact that his practical interests were those which his fellow men could comprehend. Scott was not a romanticist in the sense in which Coleridge was, or Shelley. He did not desire spiritual freedom; he was not conscious of the trammels of an ordered, conventional life; he had no dislike of the political and social world as it existed, no leanings toward revolution. But, on the other hand, he had in his blood an ardent love for Scotland, and an intimate sympathy with Scotchmen; he had, too, a fascinated view of the past. Thus he represented the simple, permanent elements of romanticism, the elements which his public were prepared to accept; and thus to an audience which neglected Wordsworth and flouted Shelley, Scott became the prophet of a new literary faith.

Scott's Romanticism.

His native land and its people Scott learned to know at first hand, in his frequent journeys through the Border Country and the Highlands. He was the first British novelist to make a background actually studied from nature a pervading and essential element in his work. His descriptions of scenery are, it is true, old-fashioned in method, unreasonably long, and full of detail; but they have an exact and vivid realism that goes far to reward the reader's patience. Moreover, the frequency with which the place determines the event shows that in Scott's drama scene is a vital element, not a mere decorative drop-curtain which interrupts the action.

His Use of Scene.

His Characters.

The natural background in Scott's work is, however, less wonderful than the human. It is noteworthy that, even as early as *Waverley*, his first novel, Scott recognized his chief strength to lie in his knowledge of Scotch types. After some hesitation at the outset of the story, he starts his hero for Scotland, and plunges him into a society composed of Baron Bradwardine, Laird Balmawhapple, and Baillie Macwheeble, with David Gellatley and Old Janet for dependents. These local types, which Scott drew so abundantly, are treated broadly for the humor and the pathos of humanity warped by circumstances into a hundred fantastic forms, but capable of sometimes throwing itself into an attitude of noble disinterestedness, of dignified endurance, or of tragic despair. When the historic drama of the rising of 1745, which draws Waverley into its sweep, has played itself out, and the pale love-story has been tamely concluded, the figure that remains with us as we close the book is that of Evan Dhu, the humble follower of the Highland chief Vich Ian Vohr, standing at the condemnation of his master, and pledging himself and six of the clan to die in his stead. "If the Saxon gentlemen are laughing," he said, "because a poor man, such as me, thinks my life or the life of six of my degree is worth that of Vich Ian Vohr, it's like enough they may be very right; but if they laugh because they think I would not keep my word, and come back to redeem him, they ken neither the heart of a Hielandman nor the honour of a gentleman." Among such types as these we look for Scott's greatest characters: Edie Ochiltree in *The Antiquary*, Baillie Jarvie in *Rob Roy*, Peter Peebles in *Redgauntlet*, and many more who stand out from the novels as complete and substantive figures in which the race of Scotchmen has expressed itself forever. Only once, however, did Scott trust entirely to this element of native strength. In *The Heart of Midlothian* he

dispenses altogether with the aristocratic heroine, throws aside the conventional plot, and gives us instead the story of Jeanie Deans, one of the most humanly moving to be found in all fiction.

It is, moreover, from local types which he knew that Scott derives his most impressive appeals to the sense of terror and mystery, already awakened in the reading public by the gothic romancers. The fantastic figures which start out of the background, Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Midlothian*, Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering*, and Norna of the Fitful Head in *The Pirate*, constitute far more powerful romantic elements than are afforded by his rather timid use of the supernatural.

His Love of the Past.

The material which Scott gained at first hand from the Scotland of his own day he supplemented by a very diligent and human, if somewhat unscientific, antiquarianism. In his childhood he delighted to hear of the past from survivors of it. Of his mother's conversation he wrote: "If I have been able to do anything in the way of painting the past times it is very much from the studies with which she presented me." Later he drew on old books and letters to supply what was lacking in personal tradition. Such intercourse with the past widened his knowledge of men, and gave him material for his historical portraits. It also provided him with many of those incidents by means of which he gives to a character or to a scene its final reality. Scott was often slipshod in putting his stories together as wholes, but he was consummate in his power to place his characters in a picturesquely significant setting, and to draw from the interplay between his persons and his scene action so appropriate to the dramatic situation that it seems inevitable. A remarkable instance of this faculty occurs in *Old Mortality*, where Morton visits Burley in the cave reached by a single tree trunk bridging the chasm of a

His Use of Incident.

waterfall. As Morton approaches he hears the shouts and screams of the old Covenanter, in whom religious fury has become insanity; and at length he sees the fearful figure of Burley in strife with the fiends which beset him. The effect of threatening scenery and of the terror of madness is brought to a focus, as it were, at the instant when Burley sends the tree crashing into the abyss, leaving Morton to jump for his life.

His Use of History.

Scott's stronghold was his native land, in the period which he could reach by fresh tradition, that is, the century before his birth. Here his historical portraits are wonderfully definite; and his presentation of historical movements, like that of the Covenanters or the Jacobites, as seen in the high light of individual experience, is full of insight and imagination. As he exhausted this material, or felt the need of stimulating his audience with variety, he went more and more into other fields, and relied more and more on formal history for his material. In his English and continental novels, literary inspiration and study never quite took the place of what was almost first-hand knowledge in the Scotch. Yet his treatment of Richard's crusade in *The Talisman*, or of Louis XI's struggle with Charles the Bold in *Quentin Durward*, or of Elizabeth's coquetries in *Kenilworth*, testify to his power of using history to give interest and significance to his action and characters, or, in other words, of making it contributory to the art of fiction.

Benjamin Disraeli.

Although since Scott's day nearly every novelist of note has attempted something in the historical field, the romantic temper, which first commended historical material to the novelist, gave place, after Scott's death, to a different mood. Scott's romantic pictures of the feudal past were flattering to a people struggling, as they thought, to preserve the relics of that past from the engulfing revolution. But

after the immediate effect of the Napoleonic War had passed away, new ideas began to make progress in England, broadening the current of English thought and life. This broadening is reflected in the work of two writers whose productions cover chronologically the middle period of the century, Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881) and Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873). Disraeli began his career with the publication of *Vivian Grey* (1826), in which a new type of hero is presented, the man of the world—a sign that the sinister, romantic rebel of Byron's tragedies had had his day. He continued to write novels of politics in which his own ambition is reflected, and his later political programme is expounded, such as *Coningsby* (1844) and *Sybil* (1845). Even after he was leader of the Conservative party and Prime Minister he used his leisure, when out of office, to write *Lothair* (1870), in which the effect of the Oxford Movement and the Catholic Reaction on English society is discussed, and *Endymion* (1881). With a large mixture of conventional romantic material, his novels contain social criticism of value and throw light on the political thought of the time.

Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, was, like Disraeli, a political and diplomatic figure. Like him he made early in his career a direct attack on Byronism. In *Pelham, the Adventures of a Gentleman* (1828), the hero is a young dandy, who learns worldly wisdom from a Chesterfieldian mother, and who, armed with unlimited conceit and self-possession, brings the world to his feet. According to Bulwer's view, society is too easily conquered to make rebellion worth while; and the success of his book proved him right.

Bulwer's first novels illustrate the later development of the sensationalism which had manifested itself in fiction at the end of the eighteenth century as one symptom of

the romantic revival. In many of his novels, notably in *Pelham* and in *Lucretia* (1846), he plays upon his reader's sense of the terrible, by his pictures of criminal life. But he infuses these pictures with a definite purpose, treating his outlaws as victims of society. *Paul Clifford* (1830), for example, of which the hero is a highwayman, was written "to draw attention to two errors in our penal institutions, viz.:—a vicious prison discipline and a sanguinary penal code." The other sensational element in Bulwer's work is a pseudoscientific use of the supernatural, of which *Zanoni* (1845) furnishes the most elaborate example.

Bulwer's Romanticism.

Naturally, with the success of Scott before him, Bulwer essayed the historical novel. In 1834, after elaborate preparation, he published *The Last Days of Pompeii*, and later *Rienzi* (1835), *The Last of the Barons* (1843), and *Harold* (1848). In all of these he tried, much more consciously than Scott, to make the novel serve the purpose of the historian. Under the impulse of Thackeray's success Bulwer turned to modern life in *The Caxtons* (1849) and *My Novel* (1853). His realism is relieved, however, by the introduction of ideal characters, which he touches with whimsical quality in the manner of Sterne, perhaps realizing that goodness is rendered more convincing by being made a trifle absurd. Altogether, with due deduction for the affected, the sensational, and the sentimental in Bulwer's novels, the fact remains that his versatility and his long-continued energy make him a useful sign of the shifting literary currents during the middle years of the century.

His Historical Novels.

His Later Works.

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) must always be one of the most striking figures in the history of English literature, on account of the dramatic nature of his success. He started from the humblest position in life; when he was ten years old he was at

Charles Dickens.

work in a blacking warehouse, sleeping beneath a counter, and spending his Sundays with his family in Marshalsea Prison, where his father was confined for debt. Yet before he was thirty he was a great writer; and before he was forty, a notable public man. No writer in English ever gathered with a fuller hand the rewards of the literary calling. It is true, other writers have made more money, or have won knighthood or the peerage; but none has had in his lifetime so wide and intensely loyal a personal following; none has had in addition to money, friends, and fame, the peculiar tribute which came to Dickens from vast audiences gathered together, not once or twice, but hundreds of times, in scores of cities, to testify by "roaring seas of applause" to his personal triumph. In middle life Dickens began to give semidramatic public readings from his works, and these grew to be his chief interest. The strain and excitement wore him out. It is a circumstance perhaps as tragic in its way as that which shadows the close of Scott's life, that this personal triumph was the direct cause of Dickens's death. Scott died, broken by the effort to retrieve by literature the effects of failure in life. Dickens died forty years later, worn out by the effort to gather in life the rewards of literature.

Dickens's peculiar triumph calls attention to the prime fact in his authorship, his nearness to his public. He began his career as a reporter, the literary calling which is most immediately of the people. He was later an editor of magazines, and even, for a short time, of a great daily newspaper. But though necessity made him a journalist, he wished to be an actor. As a young man he tried to get a position at Covent Garden Theatre. For years he was the leading spirit in a famous company of amateurs who played in various cities of England; and as we have seen, his chief interest came to be his readings. These two professional instincts

His Training.

account for much in Dickens's work. As a reporter and as an editor he studied his public; as an actor he taught himself to play upon it, through his writings and his dramatic readings from them, with incomparable skill.

It was while Dickens, then about twenty, was a reporter that he began to write sketches of London life for various newspapers. From his success with these came, in 1836, an engagement to write the letterpress for a series of cartoons representing the humors of sporting life. For this purpose he invented the "Pickwick Club," which at once made a popular hit. The death of the artist who was engaged upon the drawings left Dickens free to widen the scope of the adventures of the club, and to add other characters without stint. The complete result was a great book, formless as to plot, crowded with humorous figures. These figures are given with broadly exaggerated traits, as if Dickens had always in mind the cartoon which was to accompany the text. They talk freely, not to say inexhaustibly, and all differently. But the author's chief resource is his faculty for bringing his caricatures into contact with the actual world, in situations that expose their oddities in high relief. Mr. Tupman as a lover, Mr. Winkle as a duellist or a sportsman, Mr. Pickwick in a breach-of-promise suit with the Widow Bardell, the Pickwick Club contending with a recalcitrant horse, the Reverend Mr. Stiggins drunk at a temperance meeting—these incongruities are narrated in a style always copious, but rapid and piquant.

"Pickwick Papers."

In his later novels Dickens improved on his first attempts. He continued to be a caricaturist, to rely on distortions and exaggerations of feature or manner; but his range of effects became broader, and his figures more significant. Micawber, in *David Copperfield* (1850), "waiting for something to turn up," Sairy Gamp, in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1845), haunted

His Humors.

by the mythical Mrs. Harris, 'umble Uriah Heap, sanctimonious Pecksniff, cheerful Mark Tapley, all have distinct individuality, yet all label so conveniently common attitudes and habits of mind that we use their names freely as categories.

His Darker Characters.

In *Pickwick Papers* Dickens is purely a humorist; in the novels which followed he enlarged enormously the sources of his power over his audience. By the use of the same method which he had employed in his humors, he created figures of a different sort, to excite not laughter but loathing and terror. In the portrayal of these types also he gained subtlety with practice. Fagin and Sykes in *Oliver Twist* (1838), Quilp, the dwarf, in *Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), are examples of rather crude methods of exciting physical horror; monstrous as they are, they do not haunt the reader with the terrible suggestion of inhumanity that lurks behind the placid, smiling face of Mme. Defarge in *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), as she sits in front of the guillotine, knitting, and counting the heads as they fall. In the stories just mentioned Dickens showed again his fertility in inventing situations, using his histrionic power as freely in melodrama as in farce. The behavior of Fagin at his trial and in prison is the conception of an actor, careful to make every gesture, every expression, tell on his audience.

His Humanitarianism.

A third type of character which Dickens developed, and which in his time made immensely for his popularity, was that of the victim of society—usually a child. The possibilities of childhood for romance or pathos had been suggested by Shakespeare, by Fielding, and by Blake; but none of these had brought children into the very centre of the action, or had made them highly individual. In his second novel Dickens made his story centre about a child, Oliver Twist, and from that time forth children were expected and nec-

essary characters in his novels. Little Nell, Florence Dombey, David Copperfield, stand out in celestial innocence and goodness, in contrast with the evil creatures whose persecution they suffer for a season. And further, they represent in most telling form the complaint of the individual against society. For with Dickens the private cruelty which his malign characters inflict is almost always connected with social wrong. Bumble's savage blow at Oliver Twist asking for more food, Squeers's wicked exploitation of his pupils in *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839), are carried back and laid at the door of society. The championship of the individual against institutions, which had been a leading motive in later eighteenth-century fiction, had been checked by the reaction against the French Revolution; but in Dickens's day the "redress of wrongs" had become again a great public movement. The workings of later romanticism had begun to be reflected in a popular distrust of governmental methods, a kind of sentimental hatred of organized authority. To this feeling Dickens constantly appealed. In nearly all his books there is a definite attack upon some legal or social evil: in *Oliver Twist* upon the workhouse; in *Bleak House* (1853) upon the chancery courts; in *Little Dorrit* (1857) upon imprisonment for debt. Undoubtedly there was something theatrical in Dickens's adoption of social wrong as a motive in fiction, but there was also much that was sincere. He had himself known the lot of the persecuted; at the root of his zeal for reform was the memory of his own bitter childhood.

His Plots.

The types of character already discussed were sufficient to sustain the movement of Dickens's earlier books. These were usually simple in structure. His favorite authors were Smollett and LeSage, and he seems to have been disposed to build his own novels like theirs, on the picaresque plan. In most of them we begin with the hero in childhood, and follow his

personal adventures into the thick of a plot involving the popular romantic material of the day, kidnapping, murder, mob-justice, and other incidents of criminal life. When the author needs the usual characters of the novel, a pair of conventional love-makers, for example, he gives us figures as weak and unnatural as were many of Scott's titular heroes. In his later books, however, he gained the power of constructing elaborate plots, and of creating characters of heroic dignity and tragic intensity, such as Sidney Carton in *A Tale of Two Cities*, and Lady Dedlock in *Bleak House*. These are the most enduringly powerful of his novels, but they are not those upon which his fame rests. Dickens is remembered not as a dramatic artist in the novel form, but as a showman of wonderful resources. He is master of a vast and fascinating stage, crowded with farcical characters; with grotesque and terrible creatures, more devils than men; and with the touching forms of little children. The action is sometimes merry, sometimes exciting, sometimes pathetic. We have laughter, and horror, and tears; but the prevailing atmosphere is one of cheerfulness, as befits a great Christmas pantomime.

Dickens and Bulwer have in common their frequent use of sensational material, their tendency to seek literary effects of the sentimental kind, and their disposition to regard the novel seriously as a social engine. A vigorous reaction against all this was led by William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863). Thackeray was an Anglo-Indian, born in Calcutta. After a short career at Cambridge, and some desultory art study, he turned to literature. His first work consisted of light essays, sketches of travel, and burlesques, in which the weaknesses of the romantic school are cleverly hit off in imitations of Scott, Bulwer, and Disraeli. His first long story, *Catherine* (1839), is the picture of a female rogue, drawn on the picaresque

William Makepeace Thackeray.

plan with unsympathetic realism, and intended as an antidote to the sentimental treatment of criminals as exemplified by Bulwer's Clifford, and Dickens's Nancy in *Oliver Twist*. *Barry Lyndon* (1844) is likewise a picaresque story, being a brilliant account of the exploits of an eighteenth-century adventurer.

Thackeray gave his realistic theories larger scope in *Vanity Fair*, written between 1846 and 1848. This, like most of his succeeding novels, he published in parts, seldom supplying the matter for the forthcoming chapter until the last possible moment. Naturally, the story is not a model of structure in the narrow technical sense; but it may be said that this rather loose method of working suited not only Thackeray's temperament but also his artistic problem. For Thackeray's realism is that of the observer, not that of the analyst. He never isolates a single case and studies it with long, close patience. On the contrary, he sees life with the large vision of a man of the world. To have confined his multitude of characters within the limits of what is technically called a plot, would have introduced an element of unreality into his book. The action of *Vanity Fair* revolves about the heroines, Amelia Sedley and Becky Sharp. The two women in their opposition are admirable foils; Amelia mild and incapable—a parasite, the author calls her—living on the chivalrous protection of Dobbin; Becky, keen and competent, making her world for herself, levying tribute on every man who crosses her path. The two stories begin together, and Thackeray supplies a link between them later in Jos Sedley; but in the end he gives over the attempt to unite them, and lets the two sets of characters diverge in his novel as they must have done in life.

The Structure of His Novels.

Again, Thackeray's training was that of the essayist, and, like Fielding, he uses his story as a support for com-

ment on human life and nature. In *Vanity Fair* he introduces his characters as puppets whom he as showman can manipulate as he pleases to illustrate his views. The sceptical persiflage with which he treats his characters indicates his attitude toward the world which he pictures. In the metaphor of the puppets lurks a gleam of the satire which Swift showed in his sketch of society as Lilliput. The title, too, *Vanity Fair*—Bunyan's fair, "where is sold all sorts of vanity, and where is to be seen juggling, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, rogues, and that of every kind"—suggests something of contempt if not of bitterness. The roguishness and weakness of Thackeray's puppets has long been a ground for calling their showman a cynic; but Thackeray's cynicism is strongly tempered with tolerance and with pity. Dickens draws his pathos from the spectacle of ideal innocence exposed to the evils of the world; but Thackeray makes no less pitiful the sorrows of men and women who are themselves sinful, weak, and stupid. Becky's husband, Rawdon Crawley, is not an admirable figure, yet we are sorry for him. George and Amelia are both in their way contemptible, yet the scene of their parting is wringing with tenderness. Thackeray is merciful toward the feeble, flawed souls that he portrays, because gentleness was a part of his nature. Disillusioned as to most of the pretentious virtues of the world, he still believed in kindness, in the instinctive goodness of one being toward another, and he exemplified this belief in his books as in his life.

His Attitude Toward the World.

The success of *Vanity Fair* showed Thackeray where his true power lay, and he lost no time in beginning a second novel to appear in numbers, *Pendennis*. Its appearance was interrupted by Thackeray's illness, however, and the book was not completed until the end of 1850. In *Pendennis*, as in *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray is the moralist, but of a sterner sort. Instead

"Pendennis."

of the figure of the puppet booth, he chooses that of the morality play, representing his hero as passing through a series of temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil, each of which constitutes an episode in the book, and as finally saved by the influence of two good women, his mother and Laura. Thackeray is entirely on their side, and yet he does not hesitate to show us the limitations of their virtue, in their suspicion and cruelty toward Fanny Bolton; and Fanny, pathetic in her renunciation, is also contemptible in the ease with which she consoles herself for it. Pendennis himself, though saved from the worst consequences of each temptation, is no less ready to fall into the next; and the best example of moral courage is given by the old worldling, Major Pendennis. Of such mixed materials is human nature and the moral life made.

His Use of History.

The importance of the historical element in fiction after Scott is shown by the fact that even the petty world of *Vanity Fair* is disturbed by a great national crisis; but Thackeray, instead of using Waterloo to impose dignity and splendor upon his story, characteristically gives us a "back-stairs" view of war. We follow the battle, not in the thought of Napoleon or the Duke, but chiefly as it is reflected in the fears of the wretched Jos Sedley, in the hopes of his servant Isidore, and in the calculations of Becky Sharp;—chiefly, but not wholly: for there is poor, almost abandoned Amelia "praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart." Thackeray is interested in famous events and persons because of the light which they throw upon the common affairs of men. Even in his historical novels he is a realist, seeking to recall the world of the eighteenth century, not in distant splendor, but in the actual forms in which it realized itself to a contemporary. In *Henry Esmond* (1852), however, as in *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray's own temperament is to be

reckoned with. His sympathy with the preceding century gives to his treatment of it a warmth and brilliancy which makes the most realistic of historical novels also the most poetic.

"Henry Esmond." In *Henry Esmond* we follow the hero's childhood at Castlewood, in the mysterious atmosphere of plotting Papists; and his youth in the London of Queen Anne, where the persons and names of Addison, Steele, Prior, Swift, Fielding, Atterbury, meet us as casually as those of celebrities today. We see him take part in the wonderful victories of Marlborough, and in the daring game which the Pretender played for his crown. The vanished world lives for us in character and in episode; lives with a dignity and richness of conception and style which show Thackeray to have been, when he chose, the greatest artist among the English novelists. In his masterpiece he is writing, not as a careless, rather lazy master of a puppet-show, but in the person of the chivalrous Esmond. Every incident and description, then, must reflect his hero's character in some touch of nobility or of charm. In Esmond's repulsion from Marlborough, in his devotion to Castlewood and his son, in his passion for Beatrix, and in his love for Lady Castlewood, there is the constant revelation of an honorable and loyal man. When he is telling us of the quarrel between Marlborough and Webb, there is that in their manner which reminds us that it is a gentleman's story. When he surrenders his birthright, property, and name, he bears himself with a simplicity and a modesty which are in keeping with a great renunciation. The style itself, marvellous in its technical approximation to the manner of the period described, is yet more wonderful in its reflection of Esmond's personality. When he leaves Castlewood or stands at his mother's grave, when he bends beside the body of his dear lord, run through by the villain Mohun, always his utterance

is perfect in its intimacy, its simplicity, its distant, haunting rhythm. Even in a detail of the picture of Lady Castlewood vanishing from Esmond's sight in anger, Thackeray's distinction is evident. "He saw her retreating, the taper lighting up her marble face, her scarlet lip quivering, and her shining golden hair."

Thackeray's three later novels follow the lines of his earlier three. *The Newcomes* (1853–1855) is, like *Vanity Fair*, a large canvas of London society, and quite as successful, containing the most delightful of his heroines in Ethel Newcome, and the most winning mixture of human weakness and chivalry in Colonel Newcome. *The Virginians* (1857–1859) is a sequel to *Henry Esmond*, and *The Adventures of Philip* (1861–1862) a diluted *Pendennis*.

In his return to realism Thackeray found an industrious follower in Anthony Trollope (1815–1882). The latter adopted his master's flippant view of the novel expressed in *Vanity Fair*, but, unlike Thackeray, he never succeeded as an artist in rising above it. A novel should be written, he says frankly, to amuse young people of both sexes, and there should be nothing too unpleasant in it; at least, he promises the reader that he will never let such a thing happen in a novel of his. Trollope's fame began with a series of novels dealing with the life among the clergy of a cathedral city. *The Warden* (1855), the first of these, was followed by *Barchester Towers* (1857)—generally considered his masterpiece—by *Framley Parsonage* (1861), and by *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867). He also developed a series of political novels, and treated various aspects of English commercial and country life. In his wide survey of social conditions in the middle and upper classes of England, he comes nearer than any other English novelist to fulfilling the vast programmes of the French realists, Balzac and Zola. Trollope was a man

Anthony Trollope.

of great industry, in every sense a professional novelist, writing a daily allowance, and often keeping two or three novels going at once. Much of his work is perfunctory, but at his best he has a power of creating figures which have an astonishing air of life. Of these Mrs. Proudie, the bishop's wife, who rages through several books, is the most notable.

Charles Reade.

As Trollope may be called a satellite of Thackeray, so Charles Reade (1814–1884) in a sense shines with the reflected light of Dickens. Like Dickens, Reade had the temperament of a romanticist; but beginning his career at a time when realism was the literary shibboleth, he made it his effort not only to discover the romantic elements in real life and to treat them in the romantic manner, but also to satisfy himself and his readers of their truth by elaborate documentary evidence. Reade had an immense fondness for the stage, chiefly, perhaps, because in the actor's life he found the romance which he was always seeking. He wrote numerous plays; and one of his best-known stories, *Peg Woffington* (1852), is a story of stage life. His serious discipleship of Dickens appears in his novels with purpose. *Put Yourself in His Place* (1870) is a story designed to reflect the wrongs which trades-unions inflicted upon the individual workman. In *A Terrible Temptation* (1871) he introduces a representative of himself, a novelist, a student of modern social conditions, to whom the oppressed have recourse, and who uses his power to enlist public sympathy in their behalf and to overawe the oppressor. Reade's masterpiece is *The Cloister and the Hearth* (1861), a novel of the period of the Renaissance, with the father of the great Erasmus as its hero. To the construction of this work Reade brought his laborious method of getting up his facts, but in spite of its learning the book is one of the three or four best historical novels since Scott.

Thackeray as a realist and moralist had an earnest sympathizer in a writer who was by circumstances a romanticist. Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855) grew up in the Yorkshire parsonage of her father, with such experience as came from country boarding-schools, a year in Brussels, and her own family life with its terrible succession of tragedies—the death of her mother, the blindness of her father, the death of her sisters, and the ruin of her brother through dissipation. She and her sisters wrote for their own amusement, inventing scenes and characters to supplement the melancholy resources of the life that they knew. This perfectly natural romanticism led Emily Brontë to write one of the most strangely powerful of all novels, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), in which the hero and heroine love and torture each other in a world of their own, remote from the real world, both social and psychological.

Charlotte Brontë.

In Charlotte Brontë the imagination never attained to such tragic splendor as in her sister; her novels are, however, more nearly in contact with actual life. The first of them, *Jane Eyre* (1847), opens with a transcript from Miss Brontë's own life at boarding-school, but the heroine soon passes beyond the world of the author's experience into the romantic realm of her longing and imagination. Undoubtedly, there is much that is second-rate in the story. The hero of Jane's adoration, Rochester, is an impossible character. His mad wife is a literary inheritance from Mrs. Radcliffe. The incidents reveal almost pathetically Miss Brontë's ignorance of life and her lack of power to measure probability. But the heroine is a genuine woman. Psychologically she is a study of the author's inner life, and her romantic experience is symbolical of the attempt which Charlotte and her sisters made to enlarge and color their oppressive little world with the spaces and splendors of the imagination.

"Jane Eyre."

It was the honesty of Miss Brontë's romanticism that made *Jane Eyre* successful both with the critics and with the public. Under the advice of the critics, Miss Brontë abandoned gothic machinery in her later books, *Shirley* (1849) and *Villette* (1853), and fell back on the material of her own life in Yorkshire and in Brussels. Nevertheless, these books bear constant witness to the lack of harmony between her artistic purpose and the means which her experience afforded her of carrying out this purpose with success. For while her experience in life was limited, and constantly tended to throw her back on romantic invention, she was in purpose a realist, bent on dealing with things as they are, and on making them better. She dedicated *Jane Eyre* to Thackeray, in terms which show the moral energy which she possessed. Unluckily her life did not bring her into contact with large projects of reform. As a moralist and as an artist it was her fortune to deal, in spite of all her efforts to the contrary, with the petty or the unreal.

Her Later Works.

In one direction Miss Brontë's experience was adequate —in her contact with nature. From her books one comes to know how largely in her life the clouds, the ragged hills, the wide spaces of the Yorkshire moors under sunset or moonlight, made up for the inadequacy of human society and interests. It is true, she has the gothic trick of creating a sympathetic background to set off the incidents, but in a deeper fashion than this she makes nature enter into the warp and woof of her stories through the part which it plays in the most essential element in them, the inner life of her heroines.

Her Feeling for Nature.

Charles Kingsley (1819–1875) shared Miss Brontë's serious view of fiction; and his position in the world was such as to connect him with large issues. He was a clergyman, professor of history at Cambridge, a leader in the

"Broad Church" movement, the friend of Tennyson, and Carlyle, of whose strenuous philosophy of life he was a sort of popular exponent. In his earlier novels, *Yeast* (1848) and *Alton Locke* (1850), Kingsley gives a view of the problems which perplexed men's minds in the middle years of the century, the years of the Catholic revival and of Chartism; and he tries to point out a middle course between Catholicism and scepticism in religion, between Toryism and revolution in politics. Unfortunately, he was a disciple of Bulwer in his mingling of romance with realism, and his incidents, though dramatic, are often childishly unconvincing.

Charles Kingsley.

In his later work he carries his purpose into the historical novel. *Hypatia* (1853) is a study of the struggle between Christianity and paganism, in Alexandria, during the fifth century. *Westward Ho* (1855) is a vigorous story of the times of Elizabeth, depicting the English contest with Spain by sea and in America. In both Kingsley makes a didactic use of the historical novel, presenting to his countrymen "New foes with old faces," and seeking to develop his ideal of Christian manhood, a compound of physical energy and intellectual moderation to which he felt in some way that the Catholic Church was dangerous. His last story, *Hereward the Wake* (1866), illustrates the use of the historical novel to stimulate national consciousness. It is an account of the life of the last great English rebel against the Norman conqueror, and is a contribution to the rising tide of national feeling which expressed itself in emphasis upon the Anglo-Saxon element of the race.

The religious and social problems of England found a less passionate exponent in Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell (1810–1865), the wife of a Unitarian clergyman in Manchester. Her life brought her into contact with the industrial and social difficulties growing out

Mrs. Gaskell.

of the struggle between master and workman; and these she treated with great skill in *Mary Barton* (1848) and in *North and South* (1855). In *Cranford* (1853), her best-known book, she entered a different field, that of realistic observation developed in a somewhat fantastic setting.

George Eliot.

Kingsley and Mrs. Gaskell connect fiction with the intellectual and moral development of England, a connection which is emphasized further by the work of Mary Ann Evans, or George Eliot. She was born in 1819 and grew up in the years when, under the influence of scientific speculation, the English mind was casting loose from its theological moorings. She was for a time assistant editor of the *Westminster Review*, the organ of the freethinkers; and in this position she met John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, G. H. Lewes, and other liberals. With Lewes she formed a union, necessarily extra legal,[1] but in other respects a marriage. This and her renunciation of formal Christianity were the two important events of her life, for they placed her under the heavy responsibility of counteracting the view held by many that freedom of thought was naturally accompanied by moral laxity. They strengthened her already powerful ethical impulse. In 1857 she wrote: "If I live five years longer, the positive result of my existence on the side of truth and goodness will far outweigh the small negative good that would have consisted in my not doing anything to shock others."

Her Novels.

Before this she had begun to experiment with fiction, her first story, "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," appearing in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1856. She added to this story two others of moderate length, and republished all three in 1858 as *Scenes of Clerical Life*. The next year she published her

[1] Lewes had received his wife again after her desertion, and had thus lost the right to claim a divorce after a second desertion.

first novel, *Adam Bede*, and it was evident that a new writer and a great one had appeared. Her next story, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), turns on the refusal of her heroine, Maggie Tulliver, to break the social law for the sake of her own happiness. There followed *Silas Marner* (1861), *Romola* (1863), a historical novel of the time of Savonarola, *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1872), and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). Besides these she wrote a number of poems, the longest being *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868). After the death of Lewes in 1878 she married Mr. J. W. Cross in 1880, the year of her death.

George Eliot as a Realist.

George Eliot's starting-point in *Adam Bede* was an incident in the life of her aunt, who once accompanied to the scaffold a poor girl condemned for child-murder. This aunt was the original of Dinah Morris, the woman preacher who rides in the hangman's cart with Hetty Sorrel. Hetty's aunt, Mrs. Poyser, is said to show some traits of George Eliot's mother; and Adam Bede was drawn from her father. Indeed, in her realism she was in large measure dependent on the material of her own early life in Warwickshire and Derbyshire. *The Mill on the Floss* abounds in local studies of charming humor. The elder Tullivers, the Gleggs and the Pullets, and Bob Jakin, are as definite as Scott's minor characters, and as amusing as those of Dickens. In *Romola* she made a scholarly effort to reproduce faithfully the past, but the effort has not the reality of her earlier books. In *Middlemarch* she returned to the provincial life of the Midland counties with conspicuous success in such characters as the Garths and the Vincys. The chief sign of decline in George Eliot's last novel, *Daniel Deronda*, is the attempt to replace these vigorous living beings with badly imagined puppets like the Meyricks. She had used up the material of her youth, and found nothing in her brilliant life of culture and travel to take its place.

Adam Bede is the most natural of George Eliot's books, simple in problem, direct in action, with the freshness and strength of the Derbyshire landscape and character and speech in its pages. Its successor, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), shows signs of a growing perplexity on the part of the author, of a hesitation between her art and her message. For George Eliot was more than an observer; she was also a scientist and a moralist. She was not content to picture human life as it appears. She tried to pierce behind the shows of things, and to reveal the forces by which they are controlled. Accordingly she analyzes her characters. In the case of the simple types this analysis takes the form of comment, rapid, incisive, and quite convincing. She tells us, for example, that Mrs. Tulliver was like the goldfish who continues to butt his head against the encircling globe; and at once the type of cheerful incapacity to learn by experience is fixed before us forever. In the case of the more conscious, developed characters, her analysis is more elaborate and more sustained. For her heroines George Eliot drew largely upon her own spiritual experience, and this personal psychology she supplemented by wide reading, especially of the literature of confessions. In this way she gained an extraordinary vividness in portraying the inner life. Her most characteristic passages are those in which she follows the ebb and flow of decision in a character's mind, dwelling on the triumph or defeat of a personality in a drama where there is but one actor. Such a drama is that which Maggie Tulliver plays out in her heart, torn between the impulse to take her joy as it offers, and the unconquerable conviction that she cannot seek her own happiness by sacrificing others.

As a Psychologist.

Further it is to be noted that George Eliot never lets her case drop with the individual analysis. She always strives to make her case typical, to show that the persona

action and the results which follow both to the individual and to society are in accordance with general laws. Dorothea's defeat and Lydgate's failure in *Middlemarch*, Tito's degeneration in *Romola*, Gwendolen Harleth's humiliation and recovery in *Daniel Deronda*, are all represented as occurring in obedience to laws of the ethical world, as immutable as those of the physical. This is George Eliot's chief function as a writer, the interpretation of the world in terms of morality. She does not deal with party questions, nor primarily with industrial or social problems. Her ethical motive is a broader one than the emancipation of thought, or the formulation of a political programme. It is to show how, in obedience to law, character grows or decays; how a single fault or flaw brings suffering and death, and throws a world into ruin; how, on the other hand, there is a making perfect through suffering, a regeneration through sin itself, a hope for the world through the renunciation and self-sacrifice of the individual. "It is a blind self-seeking," she tells us through Dinah Morris, "which wants to be freed from the sorrow wherewith the whole creation groaneth and travaileth," for, as she says again, "those who live and suffer may sometimes have the blessedness of being a salvation." It is this possibility of blessedness which in George Eliot's view is the compensation for evil; that we may

As a Moralist.

> Be to other souls
> The cup of strength in some great agony

in part makes up for the presence of that agony in the world. Whatever be the scientific value of a system of ethics which makes the service of humanity the highest reason for doing right, or whatever the disparity between the novelist's art and the presentation of such a system, George Eliot's work represents the most conscious and sincere development of fiction with a purpose.

George Meredith.

It is significant of the slow growth of George Meredith's literary reputation that, though we think of him as the successor of George Eliot, his first novel appeared before hers. He was born in 1828, began his literary career with a volume of poems in 1851, and published *The Shaving of Shagpat,* an oriental burlesque, in 1856. His first great novel, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel,* appeared in 1859, and other works at intervals of two or three years. Of these, *Beauchamp's Career* (1876), *The Egoist* (1879), *Diana of the Crossways* (1885), *One of Our Conquerors* (1891), *Lord Ormont and His Aminta* (1894), and *The Amazing Marriage* (1895) are the most noteworthy. He died in 1909.

Meredith's Themes.

Meredith, like George Eliot, is a psychologist, and in some sort a moralist. He chooses situations and events from actual life, and analyzes the reaction of his characters with great minuteness. This is notably the case in *Diana of the Crossways,* in which he takes a well-known case of a prominent literary woman who sold to a newspaper a political secret intrusted to her by her lover. Meredith boldly imagines all the mental states surrounding such an act, from temptation to retribution. Here, as in all his novels, he tests his characters by their response to the situation, which is often of an unusual, sometimes of a grotesque nature. Even when they fall, even when they suffer defeat, it may be that they show true metal and are of heroic stuff. Like George Eliot, Meredith is concerned with sins of the self, but whereas George Eliot shows invariably the tragic results of selfishness, Meredith works also through comedy; the one scourges evil-doers, the other makes them ridiculous. *The Egoist* is a comedy in Ben Jonson's sense, as purging in its morality as classical tragedy.

Meredith was in open revolt against the realistic school of his day, which held that the object of art was to repro-

duce life with scrupulous minuteness. He shows this in his selection of unusual situations, in his suppression of detail, and in his emphasis upon the things that are truly significant. While George Eliot seeks to present a fully developed human society, and is at pains to make her characters talk with absolute realism, Meredith concentrates attention upon his typical characters, and cares little whether his men and women talk naturally so long as they embody the essential, spiritual truth of humanity. His dialogue is more highly compressed, more heavily loaded with meaning, than it could be in actual life. The same pursuit of the essential makes him abrupt in structure; he shifts the scene suddenly, he drops the thread of his story and picks it up again where he wills, in such a manner as to render it difficult for any but a practised reader to follow him. Like Browning, instead of presenting his tale in plain, clear narrative, he prefers to give it to us in flashes and half-lights, as it is seen from different points of view. He plays round his story, seeming to miss a hundred strong situations for which the reader actually hungers. But this is the strategy of novel-writing. After pages of skirmishing he at last brings his characters to battle in just that relation in which every force is available. Thus in vital moments Meredith does for his readers, more than any other novelist, what the artist should do—he gives a heightened sense of realities. He does not reproduce life; he does not decorate it; he does not idealize it; but he exemplifies it in types and situations of unusual meaning and power.

Meredith's Style.

As has been said, Meredith was a poet before he was a novelist, and he became a great one, though in this character, also, the public has been slow to recognize him. He was personally a friend of the Preraphaelites, and from them took over the literary ballad, in which form "The Nuptials of Attila"

Meredith's Poetry.

is his best. His poems possess many of the qualities of his novels. *Modern Love* (1862) is a psychological analysis of a tragic marriage in a sequence of sonnets, each of sixteen lines. In the "Ode to the Comic Spirit," which he calls "sword of the common sense," he sets forth the part of comedy in awakening the minds of men to the great issues of life. In "A Faith on Trial," with an optimism which reminds one of Browning, he cries his belief in nature, which has evolved the mind of man from mere sentient life. But his greatest poem by common consent is "Love in the Valley." This is a genuine pastoral, the exquisite beauty and grace of a girl weaving itself through pictures of nature from dawn to noon and twilight and night, under sun and rain and wind, amid flowers and birds and country sights and sounds, making a whole of infinite loveliness, a harmony that belongs to a symphony as well as to a poem.

Thomas Hardy.

Thomas Hardy's career has, like Meredith's, been a long one. He published *Desperate Remedies* in 1868 and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* in 1873. *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) and *The Return of the Native* (1878) followed. His popular reputation began, however, with *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1892), and was established by *Jude the Obscure* (1896). Since that time he has devoted himself to poetry, writing many ballads of the southwest of England, and a long poem in dramatic form, *The Dynasts* (1903–1908), in which he develops themes of the great world struggle centring about Napoleon.

Contrast with Meredith.

Hardy's art is in sharp contrast to Meredith's, both in fiction and poetry. In Meredith's view of life, man is all important. The works of man, his society, his consciousness, and his expression of himself, are the great facts of the world. Man is indeed held down and sacrificed, by his own mistakes and by those of his fellows; but he can rise

against this human perverseness, attack it, and overthrow it, or die valiantly in the attempt. The struggle of humanity is one of a man with men, or of a woman against a world of men, and is always capable of yielding glorious victory. This hope gives brightness to all of Meredith's books, even to the most tragic. In Hardy's world, on the other hand, man is of the smallest importance; the study of man's intellect and of his works will never bring us nearer to the secret of the universe, to the essential reason or unreason of things. A man is not held, thwarted, and insulted by his fellows only; his warfare is not chiefly with them; the perversity of his lot is not chiefly of their making. It is rather of the very nature of the world into which he is born, a world full of the irony of circumstance. It is true, human beings are often the vehicles of that irony, but we cannot say that Hardy's heroes are conquered by human opponents. They fall before they can come to close quarters with the enemy.

Tess Durbeyfield meets mischance after mischance in a lot which is not of her choosing. Again and again she is defeated in her effort to make known to her betrothed what has befallen her; and when at last on her marriage night she tells him, she is met by a flat denial of her personality. "You were one person; now you are another. . . . The woman I have been loving is not you." Jude the Obscure, checked in his ambition for scholarship, cannot get near the man behind the system which damns him. He can only write bitter words on the outside wall of the college which refuses him admittance. Thus Hardy's world is without the element of healthful, hopeful combat. Life is tragic by hypothesis; the irony of circumstance is a recognizable element in the metaphysical constitution of the world. Often the operations of this time-spirit are humorous, with a grim, contemptuous humor that is as bitter as its malice.

In contrast with the insignificance of man, Hardy presents the eternal reality of nature. With him the scene is an element of first importance, essential in the development of the story. Sometimes he treats it, especially in his early work, in a poetic and idyllic fashion, as an escape from the tragedy of life—the pastoral escape. But more often he uses it with symbolical meaning, as when he makes the warped, misshapen, stunted trees in *The Woodlanders* suggest "the unfulfilled intention" in human life; or he represents it as the embodiment of the power not ourselves which works man's humiliation. It is noteworthy that in his human types he chooses those which are closest to nature, those in which the primitive impulses are strongest. Meredith draws his characters from the walks of life where men and women are most complex, where thought is most active. In Hardy's view, thought is as futile toward truth as was the Tower of Babel to scale the heavens. Meredith, in his belief in the significant, is continually heightening the individual, pushing his characters beyond human limits. Hardy holds that nothing in man is significant except race, sex, and the great servitude to time and nature; and hence he chooses types which will present these realities most clearly.

Hardy's Use of Scene.

Hardy began to write novels when George Eliot was at the height of her fame, and her influence is clearly to be seen in his work. Like her he is a psychologist and a realist—bolder, indeed, in his realism, since he had also before him the examples of the French naturalists, Zola and Maupassant. He is also the product of a scientific age, though law in his universe becomes fatalism, the manifestation of a blind "will to live" which, from the human point of view, often seems malevolent caprice.

Hardy's Philosophy.

It is not necessary to identify the pessimistic background of Hardy's novels with a personal creed. It is

enough to say that it was in harmony with the mood of the late nineteenth century, a mood of discouragement and disillusionment resulting in part from the decline of religious faith, and the account of the world and of man's position in it given by science. Just as the influence of Kant and the romantic philosophers contributed to the Romantic Movement in literature of the early century, so the influence of Schopenhauer, with his presentation of life as the result of a blind "will to live" manifesting itself ruthlessly in defiance of man's conscious reason, counted for much in determining the realistic and pessimistic spirit of its close. It is in such times that the romantic view, by providing an escape from the discouraging contemplation of the realities of human society and suggesting the possibilities of independent, ideal, life in each individual, may be a wholesome and invigorating tonic—and as such we must consider the work of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Realism, Pessimism, and Philosophy.

Stevenson was born in Edinburgh in 1850. After a brief attempt at the study of law he, like Scott, gave himself to literature. His first ventures were critical essays, in which, following the romantic critics, he made literature a happy hunting-ground for adventure. He next sought experience of life in the same spirit. A canoe trip among the rivers and canals of Belgium and northern France gave him material for *An Inland Voyage* (1878), and a trip through the Cévennes Mountains supplied that for *Travels with a Donkey* (1879). A rapid journey across sea and land to San Francisco to meet his future wife similarly resulted in *The Amateur Emigrant*, and some of the sketches in *Across the Plains;* the fruits of his honeymoon in the Sierras appeared in *The Silverado Squatters* (1883). Tuberculosis forced him into a long search for health at Davos Platz, at Hyères, and in the Adirondacks, and in-

Robert Louis Stevenson.

stead of personal adventure he was obliged to have recourse to imagination. *Treasure Island* (1883) is a fascinating tale of piracy and search for treasure; *Kidnapped* (1886) and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) continue this vein. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) is a tale of spiritual adventure, a superstition of science fraught with a moral symbolism. In 1890 he sailed from San Francisco for Samoa, where he spent the last years of his life, finding in the South Seas new and strange matter for the *Island Nights Entertainments* (1893) and *Ebb Tide* (1894). His imagination carried him back to his early field, Scotland in the eighteenth century, and he wrote *David Balfour* (1893), a sequel to *Kidnapped*, and was engaged on two unfinished romances, *St. Ives* and *Weir of Hermiston* at the time of his death in 1894.

Stevenson's Theory of Fiction.

Stevenson differed from many of the writers of fiction thus far considered, in that he was by no means a novelist by accident. He tried his hand at plays and poetry, as well as essays, but came to fiction by conscious choice. Not only did he seek material, but by practice and study he evolved his style, in the spirit of an artist. For he held the belief that art, and especially the art of fiction, has a great function to perform in life. He did not believe that this function was to reproduce life. He repudiated the theory that art can "compete with life," in Henry James's phrase, or that it should be sacrificed to make life better, as in George Eliot's practice. He held that only by reaching its utmost attainable perfection can art perform its true service to life—by enabling men to escape from its superficial commonplace "realities," in which their daily existence must be passed, into realms of spiritual freedom. "Fiction," he maintained seriously, "should be to the grown man what play is to the child." "His life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud; there will be some golden chamber at the heart

of it in which he dwells delighted." It is to evoke that "golden chamber of a man's dreams" that Stevenson considers the function of romance.

Stevenson's Art.

Stevenson has presented in several essays his artistic theory, according to which incident is to be regarded as the highest mood of fiction. But his practice in his later works shows that he did not satisfy himself with merely inventing surprising adventures and imagining remote conditions. With him human nature and human issues are at the centre of the developing web of event; and from the most romantic background human character disengages itself in strong, clear forms. Alan Breck on the Scottish moors, in *Kidnapped*, and Wiltshire, in *The Beach of Falesà*, are both incontrovertibly actual. Stevenson's romanticism shows itself most interestingly, also, in a spirit of artistic enterprise and adventure. His novels and tales are more various and daring in their method and technic than those of any of his predecessors; and on the whole his artistic experiments justify themselves. In firmness and clearness of structure, in devices of description and narrative, and in surface brilliancy of style, he marks the extraordinary technical advance which the novel has made since the days of Scott.

Stevenson owed his intimate friendship with his readers more perhaps to his essays than to his novels. He was a successor of the romantic essayists of the early century, reminding us of Hazlitt in the range of his subject-matter and the zest with which he reacted to books, cities, pictures, sports, experience of life, and the characters of his fellow men. Underlying all this there was a philosophy quite in harmony with his serious view of the function of romance, a philosophy most definitely stated in two essays in the series *Across the Plains*—"*Pulvis et Umbra*" and "A Christmas Sermon." At the outset he accepts the scientific view of the world. "Of the Kosmos, in the

last resort, science reports many doubtful things, and all of them appalling." The universe is "space sown with rotatory islands," made of "something we call matter," which "rots uncleanly into something we call life," which in turn preys on itself—"lives tearing other lives in pieces, cramming them inside themselves" until "our rotatory island is more drenched with blood . . . than ever mutinied ship." But in man, the final product of this fearful process, we find "one thought, strange to the point of lunacy; the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbor, to his God." Nay, the theory of evolution, emphasizing man's kinship with the lower animals, gives ground for believing that something of the same ideal animates all life. Thus he concludes, "God forbid it should be man that wearies in well-doing, that despairs of unrewarded effort, or utters the language of complaint." It is to this that the religious faith of Tennyson, and the moral sanctions of George Eliot fine themselves down; but the assertion is made as confidently as theirs, though in lower terms; and represents as complete an answer to materialism and pessimism. Stevenson was, in effect, at one with Browning and Meredith in their optimistic striving; and his romantic art, like theirs, may be considered as the collection of instances of the manifestation of such idealism.

Stevenson's Essays. His Idealism.

CHAPTER XVI

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

In a sense the historical treatment of English literature may properly end with the two writers who close the last two chapters—Pater and Stevenson. They represent the culmination of long literary tradition, and they are the most recent writers to whom can, with certainty, be ascribed a permanent place in such a record as this book aims to give. Moreover, the period which follows, including the last years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth, is one in which production is so enormous, and schools and tendencies so numerous and contradictory, that without a longer perspective than is now obtainable it is difficult to give a systematic account of them.

Historical and Contemporary Literature.

One striking and fundamental difference between contemporary and historical literature appears in the change in the character and position of literature itself in relation to the whole body of human life. Throughout the history of literature we recognize a distinction, more or less sharply drawn, between those writers to whom writing is an art governed by rules, who minister to a reading public of connoisseurs educated by criticism, and those who use writing as a means of direct popular appeal, and to whom, as to their audience, considerations of form are unimportant compared to those of subject-matter. At the present time the second or democratic tendency in literature has been intensely stimulated by popular education. Everybody reads, and the mighty business of supplying reading matter to an immense and voracious public has tended to break down the direction and limitation of lit-

Literature and Democracy.

erature as an art. And on the other hand, the men of letters no longer form an exclusive caste—an institution to which the reading public looks for guidance in its taste. The profession of writing is not protected, as is that of painting or musical composition, by an exacting technic which must be mastered. Just as everybody reads, so nearly everybody writes, or threatens to do so. To define writing as an art, therefore, to value its product as literature, and to trace the forces governing its production as criticism, become increasingly difficult. More than ever, literary product is a matter of social, not of literary history.

Variety of Literature.

The first influence of democracy on literature has been to increase it in amount; the second has been to diversify it. The reading public is now too large to be guided by any dominant interest, either in thought or form. Thus the material of the past has been increasingly drawn upon, and there is at the same time a more resolute effort to use the substance of contemporary life, to make every department of that life a subject of literary treatment. The subject-matter of contemporary literature shows the eclecticism which we noted in the Victorian Age; its spirit and forms are still more various and unstable. The neopagan view of life is opposed by a vigorous neochristian school; the doctrine of escape from life is met by a resolute neostoic assertion of the strenuous life; pessimism is combated by optimism; scientific materialism, by new schools of spiritual interpretation. Literary forms undergo strange transmutations, and literary fashions succeed each other with bewildering rapidity.

Realism.

This lack of any leading and decisive direction in the abundant literary movement of the last decade of the nineteenth century entitles it to the name decadence—that is, a time when decay of the old is not offset by any certain birth of the new. It is,

however, now possible to see, in this confusion, one tendency, which, carried forward, may prove to be the characterizing impulse of the early twentieth century, as romanticism was of the early nineteenth, and classicism of the early eighteenth. That tendency is determined by the interest of the new vast reading public in realities, in the facts that govern our habitation of the earth. But contemporary realism is very different from the interest in the phenomena of the surface of society which goes under that name in the past. As the result of the influence of science, it looks deeper and values facts for their significance. At the same time it is acutely conscious of the meaning of fact for the immediate present—it is, in other words, journalistic.

Journalistic realism may then be accepted as a definition of the leading tendency of contemporary literature. Its effect is seen in the personal attitude of writers toward their art. Whereas formerly they aspired to greatness in terms of time—seeking, in Milton's fine phrase, "to leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die"—to-day the success of a writer is estimated in space—in the wide extent of his momentary appeal. To possess the whole of the public for a few years, instead of a "fit audience though few" for centuries, has come to be the object of ambition. And accordingly as literature has become more highly contemporary than ever before, its realism has become more penetrating and sensational, more immediate and minute. A powerful support to this new realism is found in the artistic device of *impressionism;* instead of philosophically trying to tell the whole truth about an object the author is satisfied to present with his utmost force the aspect of it which appeals most strongly to himself. And a second support is found in the device of *symbolism*—that form of idealism which sees in the commonplace details of life

Journalism, Impressionism, Symbolism.

a significance beyond mere fact, a suggestion of power, psychic or spiritual, beyond the definition of our intellect. These three terms—journalism, or preoccupation with the immediate present; impressionism, or emphasis upon a single point of view; and symbolism, or suggestion of spiritual significance, are of constant occurrence in the discussion of contemporary literature. As we look back, we see them in the literature of the past—there was journalism in the Elizabethan drama, in the eighteenth-century novel; there was impressionism in nineteenth-century criticism and poetry; there was abundant symbolism in poetry, from Langland to Browning—but never have the three been so closely and consciously united to form a literary ideal and determine a literary technic as in the present. The qualities of that technic may be defined as timeliness, vividness, and significance.

Realism and Literary Forms.

The influence of realism on the types of literature is seen in the general tendency to subordinate form to matter—to reduce to a minimum all technical considerations which stand in the way of the immediate communication of the writer's thought to his public. We see this in the breaking down of conventions which were supposed to characterize the several literary forms and to be essential to their definition. The structure of the novel, for instance, is no longer the careful balance of characters in an ordered plot or intrigue; it is more likely to be an assembling of vital figures and facts in that casual and accidental association which is characteristic of real life. The drama owes its revival as a serious form of literature largely to its abandonment of artificial construction and its direct treatment of human material. Nowhere is this modification of form to suit the requirements of real subject-matter more evident than in poetry, in which the technical elaborations of metre and rhyme are giving way to very simple and direct rhythmical utterance.

Of the confusion of tendencies in thought and form which, as has been said, justifies the term decadence in description of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, two writers, both born in Ireland, Oscar Wilde and George Moore, are conspicuous examples. Both practised many forms of literature, and both exemplify the rapid change of attitude and fashion characteristic of the period.

Oscar Wilde.

Oscar Wilde (1856–1900) was born in Dublin and educated at Dublin and Oxford. At the latter university he came under the influence of both Preraphaelitism and neopaganism, which are evident in his first volume of poems, published in 1881. It was to popularize the pagan attitude toward life that he began to lecture, in the effort to enlist the public in the so-called æsthetic movement, or cult of beauty in life. He continued his literary career with fiction, dramas, and essays —a restless search for novelty characteristic of the end of the century. Not only did he enter all departments of literature, but in each his work is utterly various; it is as if in letters he were exemplifying Pater's doctrine of life as separate moments, to each of which should be given a value for its own sake, apart from those which precede and follow. In fiction he gives us the beautiful idyl, "The Happy Prince" (1888) and the morbid study of personality, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891); in drama he presents the comedy of manners in *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), the pure farce in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1897), and the tragedy in *Salome* (1893), in which the pagan and Christian strains are mingled in the sensual love of the daughter of Herodias for John the Baptist; in the essay he ranged from the brilliant paradoxes and whimsical defense of absurdities of the *Intentions* (1891) to the remorseful self-study of *De Profundis* (1905). Finally in poetry he passes from the artificial pagan and Preraphaelite verse of his youth, with its imi-

tation of emotion, to the terrible sincerity of "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" (1898). This last, as well as *De Profundis*, was written in prison, whither he was sent for immorality. This experience seemed for a time to bring into his life the sincerity that had been lacking. "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," written in simple ballad metre, is one of the most poignant records of human suffering in all literature. In its simplicity and closeness to life it anticipates the work of Masefield in the next century.

George Moore.

A second writer whose interests are likewise too miscellaneous to allow him special classification, but whose career is an important witness to shifting currents of literary influence, is George Moore. He was born in 1853, in Ireland. In his early study of art, in London and Paris, he was drawn to the unethical, purely æsthetic attitude toward life which we have called neopagan, a phase which is represented by two volumes of verse, the second called *Pagan Poems* (1881). Later he was deeply affected by the French naturalistic school of fiction headed by Emile Zola, and when he definitely abandoned painting for writing he published a series of novels which show a boldness in dealing with life quite at variance with the Victorian tradition. The first of these, *A Modern Lover* (1883), was merely crude and vulgar (it has since been rewritten), but ten years later in *Esther Waters* (1894), George Moore produced a masterpiece of close study of the English servant class. The heroine may be compared to Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as an example of utterly plastic human material, but it is to be noted that while Hardy is under some suspicion of arranging his events to correspond with his view of a hostile universe, to Esther Waters things happen as naturally as the falling of the leaves. Besides the novels there belong to this period Moore's first essay in confessional literature, *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888), and two volumes of criticism, *Im-*

pressions and Opinions (1890) and *Modern Painting* (1893), in which he did great service by explaining and defending impressionistic and realistic schools of French painting to English readers.

The third phase of George Moore's activity began with his association with the Irish literary movement (see pp. 461–467). He took up his residence in Dublin, and became concerned with the Abbey Theatre, for which he wrote or collaborated in two plays, *The Bending of the Bough* (1900) and *Diarmid and Grania* (1903). The most important influence of his connection with the Irish movement upon his work is seen in his fiction, in the permeation of his realism by symbolism. This is apparent in *Evelyn Innes* (1898) and its sequel, *Sister Theresa* (1901), and still more in the beautifully modulated tale, *The Lake* (1905). This is the shadowy love-story of an Irish priest, whose stagnant life is the result alike of his environment and character, which are represented and symbolized by the lake beside which he lives. Another result of Moore's residence in Dublin was to provide him with material for further personal journalism. His second volume of autobiography, *Memoirs of My Dead Life* (1906), concerned an earlier period; but the three volumes of *Hail and Farewell* —*Ave* (1911), *Salve* (1912), *Vale* (1914)—owe much of their piquant interest to his Irish associations. In his contributions to the literature of confession Moore testifies powerfully to the journalistic impulse of the time. He does not, like the classics of such literature, present a personality inspired by a single aim or passion; rather he gives us a kaleidoscopic impression of rapidly dissolving views of life, the vividness of the pictures equalled by the astonishingly frank account of his appearance in them.

Moore and the Irish Movement.

George Moore is thus an important witness to the changing phases of literary interest and fashion during a whole generation. His style, detailed and matter-of-fact

in his novels, becomes in his confessions one of intimate association with the reader, an admirable vehicle for the journalism which he practises.

Poetry

General Tendencies.

It is in the poetry of the contemporary period that the conflict between the modern tendency toward realistic treatment of actual life, and the traditional view of the subject-matter and forms appropriate to literature is most clearly seen. On the one hand, in their endeavor to bring poetry abreast of present life, certain modern poets have discarded the limited and regular measures of poetry, and write verse which is called "free" by virtue of its adoption of the longer and more irregular rhythms of prose. On the other hand, poets using the established themes and stories of the past have not only gained immense facility in imitating the technic of the later Victorians, Tennyson, Arnold, and Swinburne, but they have sought models from other periods, especially those of pronounced poetic invention, such as the seventeenth century; they have carried farther the experiments of the Victorians in the effort to adapt to English use the forms of the mediæval and classical poetry; they have in some cases succeeded in evolving a new and more intricate if not a grander music than their predecessors. Across this main line of cleavage among the poets of the present run countless cross-divisions. The neopagan movement is continued in poetry, but the Catholic reaction has brought forth the greatest school of Christian poets since the seventeenth century. The discouraged and pessimistic thought, which followed the development of natural science, is met by the assertion of the stoic faith in personality. The democratic protest of one group against the evil and suffering under modern social and industrial conditions is met by

another group with the challenge of England's dream of world-empire, an imperialism which has succeeded, as a source of poetic inspiration, the more limited nationalism of the Victorians. For convenience, however, we shall divide the present-day poets into two groups, according as they represent more completely the inheritance of the past or the call of the future.

The power of the past is best illustrated by the vogue of Stephen Phillips (1868–1915). His *Poems* (1897) are full of echoes of the great Victorians. Two poems in blank verse, "Christ in Hades" and "Marpessa," the one Christian and the other Greek in subject, show Phillips's reliance on the past for inspiration; "The Wife," however, is a modern story of the streets of London, which suggests the boldness of the later realists in dealing with actual life.

Stephen Phillips.

Stephen Phillips began life as an actor, and following Tennyson and Browning, made many contributions to the poetic drama. Here again he shows his reliance on the conventional material of the past; his *Paolo and Francesca* (1899), *Herod* (1900), and *Ulysses* (1902) are acceptable acting versions of great stories. It is a somewhat pathetic fact that only in his last volume, *Dramas and Lyrics* (1913), did Phillips achieve any personal distinction of thought and style, and by that time his early and remarkable vogue had passed.

William Watson (1858) is likewise content to go on in the paths of tradition, but while Phillips looked to Tennyson as his master, Watson returned to the more austere and limited measures of Arnold and Wordsworth. Watson's best poetry was written in memory of his predecessors—"*Lachrymæ Musarum*" on the death of Tennyson, "Laleham Churchyard" on the grave of Matthew Arnold, and "Wordsworth's Grave." Like Wordsworth he used the sonnet for comment on political affairs, and he had the

William Watson.

independence and courage to protest against the resurgence of imperialism which showed itself in the conquest of the Soudan.

A third poet who may be regarded as important chiefly as a continuation of past tradition is the present poet-laureate, Robert Bridges (1844). At the same time it must be admitted that in one direction he has increased the technical resources of English poetry—that is, by imitation of classical metres. In these experiments, which involve the application of the principle of quantity to English verse, he is more successful than Tennyson or Swinburne. Bridges is above all a scholarly poet; but this is not to say that he lacks originality. He reminds one of certain of the Elizabethans whose study of poetry as a conscious art did not exclude spontaneity. Indeed, the most accurate description of Bridges is as a belated Elizabethan. But he has gone beyond the technic of the Elizabethans, and in "Nightingales," "A Passer By," and "On a Dead Child," he has, by relying on his sense of quantity in the language he uses, written poems that have a new music.

Robert Bridges.

Of the poets whose work has shown advance in technical resources over the Victorians the greatest is Francis Thompson (1859–1907). Born in 1859, educated at a Roman Catholic seminary, a student of medicine, and then for some years a wanderer and bohemian, he at length found refuge from the world in which he was as much a stranger as Shelley, in semimonastic seclusion. His greater poetry was published between 1893 and 1897.

Francis Thompson.

Thompson represents the Christian and Catholic spirit, in profound reaction from neopaganism and materialism. Like the religious poets of the seventeenth century, he desired passionately to bring poetry once more into the service of a heavenly instead of an earthly love. In "To a

Thompson's Religious Poetry.

Poet Breaking Silence," he expresses the same ideal which George Herbert (see p. 167) set before himself.

> Teach how the crucifix may be
> Carven from the laurel tree,
> Fruit of the Hesperides'
> Burnish take on Eden trees,
> The Muses' sacred grove be wet
> With the red dew of Olivet,
> And Sappho lay her burning bows
> On White Cecilia's lap of snows.

In "The Hound of Heaven" he has dealt with the theme of many of Herbert's and Vaughn's poems, the pursuit of the human soul by the love of God—but with a richness of imagery and a sustained and swelling music that make his poetry compared to theirs as a modern symphony to a Gregorian chant. "The Hound of Heaven" is the best example of Thompson's immense technical resources. The poem, in the ode form, with lines of varying length and irregular rhyme scheme, is marvellous in the adaptation of its movement to the rhythm of life led by the errant soul, with the refrain of the insistent pursuit always nearer and more compelling. In contrast to the startling variety of movement of "The Hound of Heaven" is the stark austerity of the lines, "To the Dead Cardinal of Westminster," written in memory of Cardinal Manning. In the former poem the theme is the human soul in presence of God; in the latter it is the soul in presence of a greater soul, an earthly captain, and in both the attitude is that of pathetic humility, wholly and sincerely Christian.

Thompson's love-poems deal with the subtleties of a passion, unearthly yet not unreal. In "Sister Songs" its expression is intricate and elaborate beyond description; in "The Poppy" it is of a marvellous simplicity. The touching effect which he gains from the mingled themes of childhood and love,

Thompson's Love-Poetry.

he draws still more poignantly from those of childhood and death in "To Monica Thought Dying." To Thompson as to his predecessors, Vaughn and Blake, childhood is a mystery and a miracle far beyond woman.

Thompson's Kinship with the Seventeenth Century.

If Robert Bridges is to be described as a belated Elizabethan, Francis Thompson may be called a child of the early seventeenth century. Like the group of poets which included Vaughn and Crashaw he made religion a great subject of his verse, and like them he wrote of the themes of divine and human love, of birth and of death, sometimes with an intimate simplicity as of a child, and again with the strange and ardent subtlety of the philosopher. And like them he brought to the expression of these mysteries profound intellectual concepts, and a language much of it new to the uses of poetry. But as with these poets at their best, this intellectual quality, this freighted language, does not exclude feeling, but is infused with it, sublimated into rare and new forms of beauty.

William Ernest Henley.

The group of poets who probably mean most for the future of English poetry is that of the realists—those who have most successfully accommodated the forms of verse to the treatment of present reality. The first of these in point of time is William Ernest Henley (1849–1903). Henley was a journalist and editor during many years when the new poetry could not obtain a hearing. As early as 1874, when an inmate of the Edinburgh hospital, he wrote a series of sketches in verse, which were published in *The Cornhill Magazine*. The experience of the patient as he passes under the anæsthetic, awakes in the clinic, and afterward lies on his bed of insomnia; his observation of figures around him and of the life of the hospital as it unfolds itself, are recorded with unflinching realism. The sketches are in various forms, from the sonnet to un-

rhymed rhythms. Later Henley wrote much verse in imitation of old French forms; but his true vehicle was the unrhymed, irregular, though rhythmical ode, approaching the free verse of the present day, in which he wrote his realistic observations of city life called "London Voluntaries." His first volume of poetry appeared in 1888, and his significant popularity belongs to the last decade of the century.

Henley as a critic reminds one of Hazlitt in his strong personal attitude and downright, defiant expression of it. His friendship with Stevenson, which began in the Edinburgh Hospital, is one of the beautiful episodes of his life, but he came to resent bitterly his friend's later pietism and what he thought the unworthy popularity which it brought him. His criticism of Stevenson after the latter's death was ill judged and in bad taste, but it was part of Henley's zeal for the real and his contempt for the conventional. In the same spirit he has given expression to the neo-stoic mood of the close of the century in his best-known poem, *Invictus:*

Henley's Stoicism.

> Out of the night that covers me,
> Black as the pit from pole to pole,
> I thank whatever gods may be
> For my unconquerable soul.

This personal mood finds easy transition to the national mood of militarism. Henley's second volume of verse (1892) was called from its title poem *The Song of the Sword*, and later during the Boer War he was one of the most ardent imperialists. As editor of *The National Observer* he published the early poems of the later poet of imperialism—the *Barrack-Room Ballads* of Rudyard Kipling.

John Davidson (1857–1909), like Henley, had a long struggle for recognition. He began his career in Scotland

by writing plays; then in 1890 he migrated to London, and published two novels. His first success came with *Fleet Street Eclogues* (1893), a series of conversations in verse in which as speakers the conventional pastoral figures are replaced by journalists. He followed this with *Ballads and Songs* (1894), *New Ballads* (1896), and several additional volumes. He continued to work for the stage without marked success. He died, probably by suicide, in 1909.

John Davidson.

Davidson's poetry contains elements both of the traditional and the modern. "Old and new," he says, are ever "weltering upon the borders of my world." For example, in "The Ballad of a Nun," he tells the mediæval story of the nun who deserted her convent and returned after years to find that the Virgin Mary has guarded her place—tells it with cruel realism and with its meaning changed from praise of asceticism to glorification of experience. In the same way the story of the knight who, sharing the joys of Venus, is pardoned by the Pope on the sign of the staff bursting into bloom, becomes a justification of license. This deliberate turning of Christian legend into paganism is characteristic of the spirit of revolt in which Davidson did his work. He is bitterly anti-Christian. His "Exodus from Houndsditch" is a deliberate arraignment of Christianity for its social failure. He is a convinced materialist. The soul for him is matter become self-conscious, chiefly through pain. The whole world process is toward the experience of more intense pain.

Davidson's Modernism.

The lowest struggling motion and the fiercest blood on fire,
The tree, the flower, are pressing towards a future ever higher,
To reach the mood august wherein we know we suffer pain.

Such is his interpretation of the evolutionary process in answer to Tennyson's. The contrast between the great

Victorian poet and this modern spirit may be further seen by comparing their accounts of the growth of a poet's mind, Tennyson's "Palace of Art" with Davidson's "Ballad in Blank Verse."

Davidson's Contrasts.

For the rest, Davidson deals in strong contrasts both of form and substance. Mediæval legend and modern industrialism mingle in his pages; the crude facts of city life with memories of nature; conventional lines, feeble and trite,, with daring innovation. In "To a Street Piano" he takes, perhaps in a spirit of defiance, the most insistent of all the ugliness of life—the vulgar tunes that sing themselves in our minds,—and weaves them into a strain of beauty. Perhaps his most dignified individual work is in the dramatic monologues in blank verse, which he calls "The Testament of a Vivisector," "The Testament of an Empire Builder," etc., in which he followed the example of Browning, putting the criticism of contemporary life into the mouths of its representatives.

John Masefield.

Of the many poets active in our own day it may not be invidious to single out John Masefield as of special significance in representing in striking fashion the approach of poetry to real life. Masefield was born in 1874. He ran away to sea, and was for some years thereafter at close quarters with life. The fruits of this grim experience appear in stories and poems, most important of the latter being *The Everlasting Mercy* (1912), *The Widow in the Bye-Street* (1912), and *Dauber* (1912). These are all narrative poems, the last being the story of a painter who shipped on a sailing vessel, hoping to find opportunity and inspiration to practise his art. The account of his sufferings and death, in a situation utterly at variance with his temperament, is one of the most vivid realizations of life at sea that English literature holds. In the cruelty of its realism it reminds one of Smollett, and in its art of Stevenson. The

style of these narrative poems is of the simplest, reflecting the elemental qualities of life engaged.

Besides these narrative forms Masefield has written a number of dramatic poems. In *Philip the King* (1915) the tragedy is that of the King of Spain, who is confronted with the failure of his life work and the ruin of his people. The poet has tried to enlarge his canvas as well as to spiritualize his tragedy by introducing the ghosts of the King's crimes and mistakes, somewhat like the abstract forces in Hardy's *Dynasts*. *Good Friday* is a dramatic poem based on the crucifixion, with Pilate and his wife Procula as the chief characters. Besides these, Masefield has written one prose play of the deepest power and intensity, *The Tragedy of Nan* (1909).

Masefield's Dramatic Poems.

Fiction

The immense increase in the production of reading-matter during the last generation has shown itself nowhere more conspicuously than in fiction, for fiction has continued to be the most favored form of expression with the public. But it is to be noted that among the great number of novelists who have been active since the eighteen nineties, very few have continued in vogue more than a few years. For convenience in treatment the same division may be made as in the case of the poets, between those who tend to work in the tradition of the past, and those who manifest the greater freedom of form and wider range of subject-matter which may be thought characteristic of the future.

Of the first group the most important is Henry James (1843–1916). James was born in New York, and spent his early life in Cambridge, Mass., but his maturity he lived almost entirely in England, and his associations and ideals were those of Europe rather than America. He began his career with

Henry James.

essays and stories, publishing his first novel, *Roderick Hudson*, in 1875. This book dealt with a problem which came naturally to James, and which he made peculiarly his own—that of a young American brought into contact with the richer culture and more exacting civilization of Europe. This was the problem, also, of *The American* (1877) and *Daisy Miller* (1878). *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) is the finest of his earlier works. Here a young American girl, infatuated by the background of Florence, marries an English resident of that city—and once more James allows the problem of two civilizations to develop itself. The *Tragic Muse* (1890) deals with another problem, the opposition between the call of art and that of success in life through politics and family influence; and *The Awkward Age* (1898) with a still more subtle situation growing out of the presence of a young girl in the midst of a corrupt social environment. Similar personal problems form the core of later novels, *The Wings of a Dove* (1902), *The Golden Bowl* (1906), *The Outcry* (1911), among which it may be noted that *The Ambassadors* (1905), his later masterpiece, returns to the case of the young American, a victim to the charms of Paris, whose family arrive like ambassadors from the new world to negotiate for his deliverance.

James's Art.

Henry James belongs with Meredith and Stevenson as one of the group who have raised the English novel to the highest point of technical perfection. He was in close contact with literary movements on the Continent, particularly in France, and wrote much admirable criticism contained in *French Poets and Novelists* (1878), and *Partial Portraits* (1888), some of the most significant of which bore directly on the art of fiction. He, like Meredith, chose his material from the walks of life where consciousness is most acute, and, unlike a prominent school of realists, he believed in psychological analysis of characters by the novelist. Accord-

ingly, his novels lack external action. It is to be said, however, that when James's carefully developed situations come to solution, the effect of his art is to give an emphasis that, as in the case of Meredith, satisfies the reader's demand for dramatic and vital action. However, the limited character of James's popular success is evidence enough that what the public demands in fiction is life, and that it recognizes life rather by its material and external phenomena than by an art of analysis, however subtle and true. Another drawback to James's popularity is his style, which, like Meredith's, is a highly specialized instrument for its purpose, and in its refinements and elaborations made little appeal to the reading public.

James's titles represent works of very various length. His exact sense of artistry, indeed, made him determine his length rigidly by the demands of his material and the effect to be produced. Accordingly, we find James's fictions varying from the sketch to two volumes. One form which he made peculiarly his own is that of the novelette or long short story, in which he treated problems of less magnitude than in his novels. Among his masterpieces of this form are *The Author of Beltraffio*, *The Madonna of the Future*, *The Lesson of the Master*, and *The Turn of the Screw*.

James's Shorter Stories.

Henry James's novels deal for the most part with problems which may be said to belong to the æsthetics of life—matters of adjustment to environment, and personal development within it. The problems of Mrs. Humphry Ward's (1851) novels are mainly of the old-fashioned sort—ethical and social. They are therefore less individual and more widely typical than those with which James deals. They represent the religious, moral, and political difficulties which confronted serious-minded and well-intentioned

Mrs. Humphry Ward.

persons of the nineties and nineteen hundreds, in distinction from the frivolous neopagans or selfish materialists. This fact sufficiently accounts for their enormous though transitory popularity.

Mrs. Ward's Problems.

The first of Mrs. Ward's novels, *Robert Elsmere* (1888), deals with the problem left by the Oxford Movement—that of an immensely quickened spiritual life trying to find support in Christianity, in the face of scientific denial of the authority on which that faith has been supposed to rest. Mrs. Ward was a niece of Matthew Arnold, and it is easy to see in her first book a treatment in fiction of the religious questions which Arnold had presented in *Literature and Dogma*. Her second story, *David Grieve* (1892), enlarged the problem by considering in addition to the intellectual, the moral difficulties of man's life in this time of uncertainty. *Marcella* (1894) and *Sir George Tressady* (1896) advanced to the consideration of the organization of society in the presence of class warfare. In *Helbeck of Bannisdale* (1898) Mrs. Ward returned to the religious question, as rendered acute by the Roman Catholic revival.

Mrs. Ward's Later Work.

Mrs. Ward, like George Eliot, lived in contact with the conventional intellectual society of the time, and much of her material is doubtless the authentic product of the thought and conversation of this world. Her earlier works have, therefore, the value of social documents. Like Charles Kingsley, she believed in the cooperation of different schools of thought and classes of society; she always presents a benevolent aristocracy of intellect or wealth ready to cooperate with an earnest and aspiring proletariat. In her later books, however, she relied for material less on contact with people and more on literature. For example, in *Lady Rose's Daughter* (1903) and *The Marriage of William Ashe* (1905) she has transposed actual

well-known cases into fiction, somewhat as George Meredith has done in *Diana of the Crossways*.

Maurice Hewlett.

The effect of realism on the historical novel is best seen in the work of Maurice Henry Hewlett (1861). His first success, *The Forest Lovers* (1898), is of rather flimsy tissue, but it was followed by *Richard Yea and Nay* (1900) and *The Queen's Quhair* (1904), in which he revived those outworn figures of romance, Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Mary Queen of Scots by touches of true psychology and historical sociology. *Little Novels of Italy* (1899) is a remarkable recreation of mediæval society in the old form of the Italian *novella*. In his later work Hewlett has committed himself to a reading of modern life in terms of romance furnished by John Senhouse, who is the dominating character of the trilogy, *Half Way House* (1908), *Open Country* (1909), and *Rest Harrow* (1910).

Rudyard Kipling.

A further example of the union between romanticism and realism in fiction is furnished by Rudyard Kipling (1865). Kipling was born in India and began his career as a newspaper writer there, an experience which put him in possession of a vast amount of material which appealed to the body of English readers as a storehouse of romance, but which the author controlled with the detailed knowledge of the realist. His first literary success was the result of his short stories of army, civilian, and native life in India, many of them originally published in Indian newspapers and collected between 1887 and 1889, under the titles, *Plain Tales from the Hills*, *Forty Tales from the Hills*, *Soldiers Three*, and *The Phantom Rickshaw*. There followed the collections called *Life's Handicap* (1891), *Many Inventions* (1893), *The Day's Work* (1898), and *Actions and Reactions* (1909).

Kipling understood thoroughly the art of the short story—that of concentration upon a total effect which

distinguishes the modern short story from the old-fashioned tale. His sketches of Indian life are single to their purpose, brief and vivid as flashes of lightning. Their appeal is romantic by virtue of their remote material, stirring the imagination by all that is strange and haunting. For instance, "The Strange Ride of Morrowby Jukes" and "The Mark of the Beast" surpass in horror the gothic effects of the eighteenth century, and at the same time they are told with the calm precision of the realist. Moreover, Kipling's range of effects in these tales is enormous—horror in the two just mentioned; pathos of childhood in "The Story of Muhammad Din," and of love in "Without Benefit of Clergy"; humor in "My Lord the Elephant"; satiric comedy in "Cupid's Arrows." In the short stories which succeeded, Kipling enlarged his model, always, however, maintaining the complete unity of his effect. In "The Brushwood Boy" (*The Day's Work*, 1898) he entered the realm of spirit life, in "The Maltese Cat" (*The Day's Work*), that of animal psychology, in "With the Night Mail" (*Actions and Reactions*, 1909) he gives an imaginatively real account of future communication by aviation. One theme he has made peculiarly his own —that of human effort, the intensity of man's toil, the courage of his defiance of the elements, his miraculous achievements. In the stories of *The Day's Work* and in *Captains Courageous* (1897) he has wrought the neostoic theme of human endurance imperishably into fiction.

Kipling's Art of the Short Story.

Kipling's longer stories, which approach the novel in scope, are less distinguished for excellence in their field. His most successful work of larger dimension is done in such books as *Captains Courageous* and *Kim* (1901), in which theme, background, and characters are maintained through a succession of episodes without close connection in plot. Such are his books for children—*The Jungle Books* (1894,

Kipling's Longer Stories.

1895), those wonderfully penetrating excursions of the imagination into the field of animal life.

Kipling's Poetry.

Kipling's early fame rested as much on his poetry as on his stories. His *Departmental Ditties* (1886) and *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892) gave in simple verse the characters and characteristics of army life in India. In them and in the army tales Kipling created the modern British soldier as a figure in literature—and the value of his performance can be tested by comparing his pictures of military life with those of earlier military novelists, such as Charles Lever. Later, in *The Seven Seas* (1896) and *The Five Nations* (1903), he made himself the poet of imperialism, of the larger conception of the Anglo-Saxon's place and function in the world that came to replace the insular patriotism of earlier national poets. In his poems, in his stories, and in his journalism, based on travel or residence in every part of the British dominion, Kipling became an important force in the creation of that imperial self-consciousness in which the communities of Anglo-Saxon blood have drawn nearer together, and he has uttered the popular political philosophy of the time, for example, in "The White Man's Burden." Necessarily much of Kipling's imperial verse concerns the sea, the soil in which Britain's colonies have grown into empire. It is interesting to see how the old themes of wandering by far ocean trails and seeking strange adventures, which we see in Anglo-Saxon poetry, continue to animate this latest English poet, and how much they contribute to his conception of racial character and destiny.

Kipling's Humanity.

It is not, however, as a political but as a human poet that Kipling will be best remembered. He has mingled poetry freely with his prose, as head-notes to his stories or interludes among them, in a manner almost Elizabethan, and with striking reinforcement to his themes. In these *Songs from*

Books is distilled the essential humanity that is manifested in so many new and marvellous forms throughout his fiction. One illustration will make clear this quality of Kipling, "For to Admire and for to See," in which the human inarticulateness of the waif appears, in contrast to the poems which set forth the proud assurance of a dominating race.

I see the sargeants pitching quoits,
I 'ear the women laugh and talk,
I spy upon the quarter deck
The orficers and ladies walk.
I thinks about the things that was,
An' leans an' looks acrost the sea
Till spite of all the crowded ship,
There's no one left alive but me.

Joseph Conrad.

Another example of romance fed by adventure in remote parts of the world is afforded by Joseph Conrad (1857). Conrad was born in Poland, and spent his early life on the sea. He became by choice a writer of English rather than French, which he considered using, and began to turn into fiction the material acquired in his wandering life, especially in the tropics. His first important book, *Lord Jim* (1900), was followed by *Youth* (1902), and *Typhoon* (1903). Then after a period of miscellaneous work he returned to his true field of adventure by sea in *Chance* (1913) and *Victory* (1915).

Conrad's Art.

Conrad's stories are distinguished for certain qualities of narrative art, notably a tendency, somewhat like Meredith's and James's, to postpone the crisis and defeat expectation. The result is to accumulate the force of the situation in a total effect of explosive intensity. This is a feature of the art of the short story which has been adopted by the novelist, and in Conrad's case with extraordinary success. Again, he deals with character of a powerful and

bizarre originality, tested by strange conditions and novel adventure. Above all, he handles scene with wonderful effect, to create that surrounding and penetrating medium for such experience which we call atmosphere. *Victory*, in its slow arranging of circumstances and human forces, its prolonged tension of the situation, and its final surprising and total catastrophe, is a typical example of Conrad's art in his longer work. "The Heart of Darkness" (the second story in the volume *Youth*) is a magnificent study of atmosphere determining the unity and total effect of the short story. The heavy tropical air of equatorial Africa broods like a miasma over the monstrous and uncouth works of nature, drawing humanity itself into similar forms of atrocious extravagance.

In the fiction and drama of social criticism the most significant work of the twentieth century has been done by Arnold Bennett (1867), Herbert George Wells (1866), John Galsworthy (1867), and George Bernard Shaw (1856). Before speaking of them, however, mention should be made of Samuel Butler (1835–1902) as their precursor.

Samuel Butler.

It is fair to say that when Samuel Butler died in 1902 not one English reader in a thousand knew of his having lived. It is only since the publication of his posthumous novel, *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), and especially since the recognition of his importance by Shaw and others, that he has been elevated into a commanding position among the writers of social fiction. He was born in 1835, the son of a clergyman, and as the result of strong reaction against the evangelical religious circle in which he was brought up, he emigrated to New South Wales in 1857. Returning to London with a modest fortune, he devoted himself to painting, music, scientific experiment, and writing. Among his earlier works are *Erewhon* (1872) (an anagram for Nowhere), a utopian romance, and *Life and Habit*

(1877), a contribution to evolutionary science. His masterpiece, *The Way of All Flesh*, on which he was engaged some twenty years, was not published until after his death. This work deals with the life of a boy and young man brought up, as was Butler, under conventional religious influences, and his effort to shape for himself a life amid conditions of which he is pathetically ignorant. In its steadfast acceptance of the realities, its bold criticism of conventional morality and religion as guides to life, and its simple biographical structure, it may be compared with George Moore's *Esther Waters* as marking the new era in fiction.

Arnold Bennett (1867) began his work as a professional purveyor of wares to the reading public. Only after years of apprenticeship did he emerge as a novelist of distinction. He took as his field the industrial region of The Five Towns, which George Moore had introduced to fiction, and proceeded to picture the limited lives of its inhabitants with a faithful naturalism that reminds one of the realists of France, where indeed Bennett lived for many years. Into the everlasting monotony of this environment, however, Bennett introduced characters representative of natural romanticism to whom all life is adventure, Helen of the High Hand and Denry the Audacious, in the books bearing their names. It is as if Bennett would have us understand that the difference between realism and romanticism is that of temperament and attitude toward life.

Arnold Bennett.

Bennett's first widely successful novel was *The Old Wives' Tale* (1908), in which he combines the two threads of realism and romance by following the careers of two sisters—Constance, who stays faithfully in her shopkeeping routine at Bursley, and Sophia, who elopes into the more spacious career of a pension keeper in Paris. In the trilogy, *Clayhanger*

Bennett's Novels.

(1910), *Hilda Lessways* (1911), and *These Twain* (1914), he again associates two characters of the same opposite tendency, the faithful realist, Edwin, and the romanticist, Hilda, whose interrupted love-story and subsequent marriage are narrated from both points of view. As a transmutation of every-day life into fantasy, Bennett has never excelled the skit *Buried Alive* (1908), in which the almost supernatural experience of a man surviving himself, attending his funeral, and enjoying his posthumous fame is brought about by the most natural means, and sustained through the most ordinary environment and incidents.

Bennett's Social Criticism.

Bennett's social criticism may be regarded as incidental to his main purpose, implicit rather than explicit, historical rather than analytic. He presents in long perspective the dull materialism, hypocrisy, and conventionality of Victorian provincialism as seen in the survivals of it in The Five Towns—Darius Clayhanger and Auntie Hamps in the trilogy. Like Butler, he is severe in his picture of evangelical religion, and like Wells, he represents the shams and shortcomings of education and of civilization, both social and domestic, but he does this with the detachment of the historian, not the ardor of the reformer. One of his plays, *Milestones*, is an example of this social criticism involved in the mere record of changes in the individual wrought by the passing of time.

John Galsworthy.

John Galsworthy (1867) is a subtler artist and more penetrating critic of life than Arnold Bennett. Like Bennett, he recognizes the shiftless arrangements which mankind has made for its inhabitation of the earth, physically and spiritually, and which at their best go under the name of civilization, but his satire is unconcealed, as is his sympathy. Galsworthy recognizes class distinction as the cardinal fact in the edifice of society. His novels are chiefly occupied with the effect of a class on its members, or with the

inevitable opposition of classes. *The Man of Property* (1906) deals with the prosperous middle class, with its mind, its heart, and its conscience rooted in the idea of individual ownership. *The Country House* (1907) presents the lower, and *The Patrician* (1911) the higher aristocracy, with their class consciousness growing out of possession and position. *Fraternity* (1909) shows the pathetic impotence of human will to break through the barriers of class; and *The Freelands* (1915), the tragic consequences of the blindness of the so-called intelligent class to the point of view of the other. These themes Galsworthy has treated in drama also, the tragedy of a helpless lower class in *The Silver Box* (1906) and *Justice* (1910), and the futility of class warfare in *Strife* (1909).

Galsworthy's Social Criticism.

In all English fiction class has played an important part; from the time of *Pamela* the novelist has shown us individual virtue or passion breaking its boundaries. The promotion of a character from a lower to a higher class by discovery of birth or by marriage has been a romantic motive constantly in use. Galsworthy, however, takes the fact of class much more seriously and scientifically. The rewards and the penalties of life are granted strictly within the limits defined by social distinctions. One situation that arises peculiarly out of class consciousness is scandal, and this Galsworthy uses in nearly all of his novels as a test of character. There is scandal in *The Country House*, the consequences of which Mrs. Pendyce averts from her family by acting according to her class instinct of an English lady, made strong out of her very weakness; and there is scandal in *The Man of Property*, the threat of which drives Solmes Forsyte into a mad fury of possession—the only relation in life which is clear to him. There is scandal impending in *Fraternity*, between Hilary Dallison and the little model, but it cannot leap the barrier of class. On all who seek to pass beyond

the bounds of class, whether they succeed or fail, there rests the curse of futility—upon young Jolyon Forsyte in *The Man of Property*, upon old Mr. Stone in *Fraternity*, and upon the young Freelands.

Galsworthy's Realism.

Galsworthy is a realist, both minute and delicate. For example, in *Fraternity*, the sense of smell is one factor that restricts the human approach of the upper class toward the lower to a remote philanthropy; but the ways in which individuals react to this element are subtly differentiated. Moreover, he relieves the effect of detail by giving it symbolic meaning, spiritual or social, beyond the fact itself. Even various "properties" of his characters serve to suggest or distinguish qualities or attitudes too delicate for phrasing. In this faculty Galsworthy suggests the deftness of Sterne and the spiritual penetration of Maeterlinck.

Herbert George Wells.

On the whole, Galsworthy's view of mankind is pessimistic. In spite of ideal and heroic examples, his general conclusion is of the inadequacy of man to his situation. Society is a morass, in which human life sinks as sank the gigantic animals of the sloth family in their primeval slime. The first difference between him and Herbert George Wells (1866) is the hopefulness of the latter in regard to improvement of relations between man and his environment. Wells was born of the lower middle class. He obtained the really valuable part of his training in the Royal College of Science, and later in sociological investigation. It was owing to a temporary period of ill health that he began the writing of fantastic romances based on imaginary developments of physical science, such as *The Time Machine* (1895) and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). He extended his field to serious sociological essays, as in *Anticipations* (1901), *A Modern Utopia* (1905), *New Worlds for Old* (1908), and *First and Last*

Things (1908). He began seriously to write novels with *Kipps* (1905), a treatment of Galsworthy's theme of the difficulty of changing from one social class to another, done with the broad humor that Dickens would have employed. He continued the study of middle-class life in the same caricaturistic style in *Tono Bungay* (1909) and *Mr. Polly* (1910). In *Anne Veronica* (1909) he approached the theme of woman's place in modern society, as determined by education, politics, and love when marriage is impossible. He continued to discuss the opposition between passion and social arrangements in *The New Machiavelli* (1911), *Marriage* (1912), and *The Passionate Friends* (1913). It is to be noted as part of his modernism that Wells will not solve the difficulty by invoking the classical motive of renunciation, but devotes himself to studying the social consequences to his characters of acting in accordance with desire. One phase of the question which Wells considers in these stories is the relation of passion to character and man's work in the world, and this is the theme of *The Research Magnificent* (1914). It is to be noted that in this book Wells abandons the novel form for loose narrative based on the growth of a character as revealed by diaries and memoranda—somewhat like the device of Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*. In *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* (1916) the form likewise disappears before the terrible actuality of the substance—the life of an English family in the first year of the great war. All of Wells's work shows the journalistic quality of timeliness; in *Mr. Britling* it seems as if literature had for once kept pace with life, in its vivid, photographic reproduction of experience.

Wells is a clear example of the way in which biology and sociology have come to replace history as the background of knowledge in man's thought of the world. He shows the effect of the theory of evolution on ordinary thinking. He regards human life as "a succession of

births, the race like a stream flowing through us"; but with this cosmic view he has a definite conception of the individuality of each man's experience. His emphasis on this latter doctrine perhaps explains his change of form from the sociological essay to the novel, which above all deals with the individual man and woman. As has been said, he is an optimist. He believes in the intelligence and disinterestedness of men; in *A Modern Utopia* the model society is promoted by a self-chosen nobility which he calls Samurai, who devote themselves to its welfare, and *The Research Magnificent* is a study of the training of character into this voluntary aristocracy. He is optimistic not only in regard to human nature but in regard to its environment. Unlike Carlyle and Ruskin, he has no hatred of machinery. His picture of present society is as dark as theirs, but he believes that practical applications of physical and economic science will give man a worldly habitation worthy of the possibilities of his nature. And in the dark hours of the catastrophe of world war he adds religion to this faith, as his last volume, *The Invisible God* (1917), bears witness.

Wells's Social Criticism.

Drama

One of the most important movements in the literature of the later nineteenth century was the revival of the prose drama as a serious form of literary art. During the early years of the century the theatre was given over to romantic unreality or to farce, with the exception of occasional poetic dramas, such as those of Bulwer-Lytton, Browning, and Tennyson. Under the influence of French realism playwrights tried rather timidly to deal with real life, the plays of Thomas Robertson (1829–1871), *Society* (1865), *Caste* (1867), and *School* (1869), being instances. The Norwegian dramatist, Henrik Ibsen, whose studies of commonplace conditions embodying significant social

and spiritual issues reached the London stage in the eighties, was a powerful influence in this direction. Following him, English playwrights, Henry Arthur Jones and Arthur Wing Pinero, proceeded to use the stage as a vehicle for ideas and the discussion of social problems, though they continued to submit to the conventions of dramatic technic embodied in the theory of the "well-made play." The truest introduction of reality, and the boldest innovation in subordinating the form of the drama to its substance, were made by George Bernard Shaw (1856).

Shaw was born in Ireland, but removed to London in 1876. He began his career as a novelist, then joined the socialist movement and, like Wells, devoted himself to social propaganda. He was a critic of music, art, and the theatre, showing his alertness to foreign influences by *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891) and *The Perfect Wagnerite* (1898). His first play, *Widowers' Houses*, written in 1885, was not produced until 1892, and then with scant success. He followed this with *The Philanderer* (1893), a satire on the emancipated woman, and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, a treatment of commercialized vice which was refused performance by the censor. *Arms and the Man* (1894), a brilliant satire on military glory, *Candida* (1894), *The Man of Destiny* (1895), a mock heroic skit on Napoleon, and *You Never Can Tell* (1896), a farcical treatment of the new woman, followed. These seven plays were all distinguished by their attack upon some time-honored sham, their reduction to reality of some pretentiously false view. Perhaps because of their slight success as acting plays Shaw published them in two series, *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* (1898). He made the prefaces to these volumes elaborate comments on the technical and social qualities of the plays, and further to guide his readers, he expanded the stage directions into full descriptions,

George Bernard Shaw.

character sketches, and explanations, thus adapting the play to a public which was accustomed to read novels. By this campaign in behalf of the reading play he helped to raise prose drama again to the status of literature.

Shaw's later plays were more immediately successful on the stage, but he continued to publish them as books, and by the aid of prefaces to make them effective propaganda of his views on the art of the theatre and on society. He attacked the illusions of history in *Cæsar and Cleopatra*, and of romantic morality in *The Devil's Disciple*, published in *Three Plays for Puritans* (1900). In *Man and Superman* (1903) he represented courtship as a war of the sexes and man as the victim of woman, who is the incarnation of nature's purpose, and the will to live. In *John Bull's Other Island* (1904) he attacked English domination of Ireland, and made in the preface a powerful arraignment of military rule in Egypt. In *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906) he tilted against the professional humbug that surrounds medical practice, and in *Getting Married* (1908) against that which conceals the true relations of sex. *Fanny's First Play* (1911) is a satire on dramatic criticism, and *Androcles and the Lion*, on Christian martyrdom.

Always Shaw carries out the theory of the drama of ideas by making his play a challenge of some received opinion, and carrying the principle of dramatic opposition into the minds of his audience. Certain of Shaw's views are strikingly significant of his time. For example, the influence of the new biological science is seen in his suggestion of the improvement of the race by selection. He believes that democracy cannot be made to work with the present human material, and he distrusts the efficacy of the accidental hero who, in Carlyle's view, periodically saves and reanimates human society. Shaw would have society breed a race of heroes, of supermen. He attacks poverty in the persons of those weak members of society who accept it, and looks forward to their extinction with

the extension of a better race. Again, the attitude called pragmatism—of accepting as true only beliefs that will work—is shown by his attack on the idea of reform by punishment, or of the improvement of society by marriage and the home. His realism appears in his constant war on the romantic view of love, of morality, of human character, historical or contemporary. He has a special contempt for men held fast by professional rules, as doctors and soldiers. Something of this may be due to personal prejudice and idiosyncrasy, much to clever journalism. But we cannot deny to Shaw the power which Swift possessed, of startling men out of conventional opinions into independent thought.

The Irish Literary Movement

Anglo-Irish literature had its beginning in the early days of the nineteenth century. But it was not until about 1840 that there was a definite movement for the creation of an Irish culture in English. This movement was forwarded by Thomas Davis and it took its title from Davis's newspaper, *The Nation*. At the moment the movement seemed promising. There were many eloquent writers in prose and verse. Carleton, the Banims, and Gerald Griffin were the novelists of the time; Mangan, Ferguson, Davis, Walsh, and Callanan were the poets; Mitchel and Davis were the political and social writers. At the time, the Irish population was in the main Gaelic or Irish-speaking. They possessed a literature that was very original and very distinct from English, but for various reasons they were turning away from their own language. Then, while Davis and his group were working for the creation of a new culture, the double famine of 1846–1847 occurred. It destroyed a million people and it altered the whole life of the country. Irish

The First Movement for an Irish Culture in English.

culture had been contained in manuscripts and in the memories of peasant scholars and poets. The manuscripts were scattered, and the old people who were naturally the custodians of the traditions were swept away. The new generation turned toward English. Schools were established, and the teaching of Irish, or the teaching of any subject through Irish, was not permitted in them. The English language now entered into nearly every home in Ireland.

The Bringing of Celtic Material into Anglo-Irish Literature.

From the *Nation* period, when the poet Mangan worked with the scholar O'Donovan to produce versions of the Irish bardic poems, there had been a close connection between Celtic research and Anglo-Irish poetry. The most valuable poetry written in the next forty years came from Celtic originals or from suggestions in Celtic originals. Sir Samuel Ferguson, who survived from the *Nation* days, treated the famous "Ultonian" or "Red Branch" epic cycle (the cycle that has the hero Cuchullain for its central character) as Tennyson was treating the Round-Table cycle, writing narrative or dramatic poems about the different episodes. He translated a few of the modern folk-songs, bringing into English poetry an unfamiliar rhythm in such versions as those of "Cean Duv Deelish" and "Cashel of Munster," poems that have the beauty and the spirit of the originals. Aubrey de Vere wrote Catholic poetry, but the two poems by him that deal with Celtic life in Ireland—"Bard Ethell" and "The Wedding of the Clans"—represent his strongest work. Doctor Sigerson made metrical translations of Irish poetry from the eighth to the eighteenth century, and his collection *Bard of the Gael and Gall* was an important influence on the new Irish poetry.

The eighties was a period of social and internecine conflict in Ireland. What was called the Land War—a desperate struggle between popular organizations and the

government—was being carried on. Then the nationalist population which was fighting the government had split on the question of Parnell's leadership and formed two bitterly opposed factions. This quarrel filled the best Irish people with despair. They thought that while these battles were being fought out the soul of Ireland was being destroyed. And so they tried to form a new organization that would draw people together in the interests of Irish culture. Their aspiration was fulfilled in an organization for the spread of the Irish language and the creation in it of a modern literature. This was the Gaelic League. And it was this organization that provided a soil and a shelter for the new poetry, although this new poetry was to be in English.

The Gaelic League.

In Irish literary circles three writers had appeared who were to stand for distinct ideas—William Butler Yeats (1865), George W. Russell, and Douglas Hyde. Mr. Yeats stood for personality in life and letters; George Russell (known as "A. E."), for a spiritual interpretation of the world; Douglas Hyde, for the "Irish-Ireland" idea—that is, for an Ireland thinking, speaking, and writing in Irish. What is called the "Irish Revival" is due to the work and the influence of these three writers and to the work and the influence of a fourth, Standish O'Grady.

Three Representative Writers.

A book published in 1888 had contained "The Wanderings of Usheen," the narrative poem that had at once made Mr. Yeats known. Based upon an eighteenth-century Gaelic lay and dealing with one of the most charming and most dramatic episodes in the Ossianic cycle of Celtic romance, "The Wanderings of Usheen" was the first poem written in English that had the real spirit of the middle-Irish poetry—passionate delight in the appearance of nature, in strength, and in beauty; vehement lamentation for the

Mr. Yeats's Poetry.

facts of decay and death. Other poems about Ireland's heroic period appeared in Mr. Yeats's early books—notably the superb *Death of Cuchullain*. But there were also poems of homely Irish life—poems about fishers, fiddlers, huntsmen, and priests. It was evident that a poet had now appeared who could give to Irish tradition and Irish life a new and subtle beauty.

The Significance of His Achievement.

Mr. Yeats, with his verse dramas and his lyrics, has to his credit a more varied body of poetic work than any of his contemporaries. He begins with verse that has a revolutionary directness of statement. In his early poems there are no inversions, no "poetic" constructions; his statements are as literal as if they were in prose. Then, still keeping to prose construction, his verse in *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899) becomes more elaborate in rhythm, more aloof in its suggestion. Writing for the stage, his verse becomes again direct, not with the directness of written words, but with the directness of actual speech. This directness of actual speech influences his later lyrics, making them more bare and direct than prose passages written emotionally. Mr. Yeats's poetic achievement has been twofold: he brought back the poetic drama to the theatre, writing in *The King's Threshold*, in *On Baile's Strand*, in *Deirdre*, and in *The Green Helmet*, the first dramatic verse since Jacobean days that was really related to human impulse and expression and was not a mere theatre decoration; he took the new Anglo-Irish poetry, with its tendency toward rhetoric and its gleams of racial imaginativeness, and he gave it an æsthetic form that was to be the greatest influence on the next generation of Irish writers. The volume of lyrics, *The Wind Among the Reeds* and the verse drama, *The Shadowy Waters* (1901) had an esoteric content and Mr. Yeats gained the reputation of being the poet of mysticism. But it is most likely that he wrote this

esoteric verse from an intellectual impulse which urged him to create as the French symbolists were creating. The Irish mind is not mystical but intellectual, and Mr Yeats's esoteric poems show the Celtic interest in what is remote and cryptic.

George W. Russell, whose work appears under the monogram "AE" is, in the most profound sense, a mystic. Like all mystics, he is content to express a single idea. In all his volumes of verse, in *Homeward*, in *The Earth Breath*, in *The Divine Vision*, he has put into pregnant verse his all-sufficing thought. Men are the strayed heaven-dwellers—the angels who "willed in silence their own doom," the gods who "forgot themselves to men." Involved in matter, now they are creating a new empire for the spirit. He has been drawn to the study of Celtic remains; the old Irish mythology seems to him a fragment of the doctrine that was held by the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Indians. He alludes to the Irish divinities as if they were as well-known as Zeus or Eros or Apollo. He is the mystical poet of our civilization, and nearly all of what the West has found in Rabindranath Tagore is in the poems which "AE" has been writing for the past twenty years. "AE" takes a large part in the public life of Ireland, and his prose, which is splendidly eloquent, pleads for and shows the way toward the creation of a new social order. He is also one of Ireland's few distinctive painters.

"AE" (George W. Russell).

Doctor Douglas Hyde has written in Gaelic and in English, his Gaelic work being in the form of lyrics and one-act plays. But it is by his collections of Gaelic folk-poetry that he has most influenced Anglo-Irish literature. He came into contact with Gaelic tradition, not through books and translations, but through the speech and the life of a people. This poet-scholar lived with the fishers and farmers of

Doctor Douglas Hyde.

the west of Ireland, became as one of them, and made a great collection of their songs—love-songs, drinking-songs, political songs. His collection of the west of Ireland love-songs, "Abhráin Grádh Chúige Connacht, or The Love Songs of Connacht," has influenced Irish poetry, Irish drama, and Irish narrative. Before their publication, if one were asked what Irish popular songs were in existence one would think of a few homely ballads in English. But Doctor Hyde's collections showed that Gaelic Ireland possessed a folk-poetry that was as beautiful and as subtle as any in Europe. Besides collecting the songs, Doctor Hyde made admirable translations. In some of them he reproduced the distinctive metrical effects of Gaelic verse, thus showing how some interesting forms might be adopted into English poetry. In translating others he was to make a great innovation in Anglo-Irish literature. His literal prose renderings were in the idiom and the rhythm of an Irish peasant's English. These little prose pieces were to form a narrative and a dramatic style. Lady Gregory used the idiom in her version of *Cuchullain of Muirthemne* and *Gods and Fighting Men*, and Mr. Yeats advised Synge, whom he had met in Paris, to make use of it in the Irish plays which he was about to write.

J. M. Synge.

In the nineties the ascendancy of the national drama of Norway made a few Irish writers—Mr. W. B. Yeats, Mr. George Moore, Mr. Edward Martyn—think of creating a national theatre for Ireland. They began by producing in Dublin for three successive seasons plays written by Irish writers but presented by English actors. This experiment closed unsuccessfully in 1901. Meanwhile the activities of the Gaelic League and other national societies had produced a company of Irish players. This company was now ready to further any experiments that Mr. Yeats, now the leader of the Irish dramatic movement, might make.

A year afterward Mr. Yeats brought into the company the writer who was to prove the remarkable dramatist of the movement—John M. Synge (1871–1909).

His Plays.

J. M. Synge wrote six plays for the Irish Theatre, five of which they produced—*The Shadow of the Glen*, *Riders to the Sea*, *The Well of the Saints*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, and *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, the latter a powerful dramatization of the *Exile of the Sons of Usnech* (*Longes mac n-Usnig*), which forms one of the *Three Sorrows of Story-Telling* and has persisted in Irish tradition for at least a thousand years. Synge's genius consisted in his ability to give his characters a place in nature, and constantly to draw poetry from this surrounding nature—in *Riders to the Sea*, there is the tragical poetry of the actual sea; in *The Shadow of the Glen* there is the poetry of desolate bogs and open spaces; in *The Well of the Saints* there is the simple poetry of springtime; in *Deirdre of the Sorrows* there is the poetry of wood and glen. With this lyrical poetry there is intense dramatic poetry also—the poetry that his characters themselves attain in their expression of resignation, exaltation, or disillusionment. His plays are masterpieces of construction, and it may certainly be said for *Riders to the Sea* that it is one of the best short tragedies that exists. His *Playboy of the Western World* is racial comedy in the sense that *Don Quixote* is racial comedy—it satirizes the Irish delight in romantic personality. Synge's is the most colored and musical dramatic dialogue that any dramatist has attained in English since the Elizabethans; taking the actual speech of the Irish peasantry, he has moulded it into a wonderful dramatic utterance.

READING GUIDE

THE following is intended as a working bibliography, to serve as guide to a first-hand acquaintance with the authors treated in this book, and to some of the biographical and critical literature concerning them. Cheap and accessible editions and short biographies are given preference. Authors are mentioned in the order in which they occur in the body of the book, and the chapter-divisions are followed, except that the two chapters on the novel are thrown together.

Of the critical matter here indicated, the young student is of course not expected to make much use; but it will enable him to extend his knowledge of any given author or period when desired, and will serve, it is hoped, as a guide to after-study.

GENERAL WORKS COVERING THE WHOLE PERIOD

Green's Short History of the English People may be used with profit throughout, to connect literary with social and political history. Traill's Social England is valuable for reference, with the same end in view. The Dictionary of National Biography may be consulted for biographical treatment fuller than that given in the text and less extended than that furnished by the separate biographies mentioned below. The Cambridge History of English Literature is a monumental work, covering the entire subject. J. J. Jusserand's Literary History of the English People (Putnam) and Courthope's History of English Poetry (Macmillan) are comprehensive and valuable. Ward's English Poets and Craik's English Prose give extracts covering practically the whole course of English literature, and are especially valuable in the case of minor authors. Ryland's Chronological Outlines of English Literature is extremely useful for reference.

CHAPTER I: THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

General Works.—The Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. I. Stopford Brooke's History of Early English Literature and his English Literature from the Beginning to the Norman Conquest (Macmillan),

W. P. Ker's Epic and Romance (Macmillan); and English Literature, Medieval (Holt).

Translations.—Beowulf: F. B. Gummere's The Oldest English Epic (Macmillan); C. G. Child's Beowulf, etc. (Houghton Mifflin) Cynewulf and Cædmon: C. W. Kennedy's The Poems of Cynewulf, The Poems of Cædmon (Dutton). Longfellow's Poets and Poetry of Europe contains illustrations of early poetry. Tennyson's translation of The Battle of Brunanburh is in his works. Judith, with text and translations, is edited by A. S. Cook (Heath). Cook and Tinker's Translations from Old English Prose, Translations from Old English Poetry (Ginn), contain many extracts, and many short works entire.

Chapter II: The Norman-French Period

General Works.—W. H. Schofield's History of English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer (Macmillan). Ker's Epic and Romance, and English Literature, Medieval. For the language, see H. Bradley's Making of English (Macmillan); Greenough and Kittredge's Words and their Ways in English Speech (Macmillan); G. P. Krapp's Modern English (Scribner).

Texts and Translations.—Many romances are summarized in G. Ellis's Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances; see also Schofield; and the translations in Weston's Romance, Vision, and Satire (Houghton Mifflin). For other forms, see Neilson and Webster's The Chief British Poets of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (Houghton Mifflin), and Weston's The Chief Middle English Poets (Houghton Mifflin). Many texts are in Manly's English Poetry (Ginn).

Chapter III: The Age of Chaucer

General Works.—Kittredge's Chaucer and his Poetry (Harvard University Press); Root's The Poetry of Chaucer (Houghton Mifflin). Jusserand's English Wayfaring Life in the 14th Century, and Conan Doyle's White Company furnish vivid pictures of society. Froissart's Chronicles (Macmillan).

Chaucer. *Texts.*—Single volume editions are edited by Skeat, Students' Chaucer (Clarendon Press), and by Pollard, Globe Chaucer (Macmillan). Selections are edited by Skeat, by Greenlaw (Scott, Foresman), Emerson (Macmillan), and many others. A translation by Tatlock and Mackaye, The Modern Reader's Chaucer.

Gower, Piers the Plowman, etc. *Texts.*—Gower is edited by G. C. Macaulay (Kegan Paul). Wyclif, Select English Works, is edited by Arnold (Clarendon Press). Piers the Plowman is edited by Skeat (Clarendon Press). The King's Quair is edited by Skeat (Blackwood). The Travels of Sir John Mandeville in modern spelling is published by Macmillan. Le Morte Darthur is edited by Gollancz (Temple Classics) Malory's Morte Darthur (Temple Classics). English and Scottish Popular Ballads are edited by Sargent and Kittredge (Houghton Mifflin) and by Gummere (Ginn).

Chapter IV: The Renaissance

General Works.—F. Seebohm, The Era of the Protestant Revolution (Scribner); L. Einstein, The Italian Renaissance in England (Macmillan); J. A. Symonds, A History of the Renaissance in Italy (Smith Elder); Wm. Hazlitt, Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth; G. Saintsbury, Elizabethan Literature (Macmillan); W. Pater, The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry (Macmillan); J. Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, translated by S. G. C. Middlemore; Sidney Lee, The French Renaissance in England (Oxford, 1910); F. E. Schelling, English Literature in the Life Time of Shakespeare (Holt, 1910); Algernon Charles Swinburne, The Age of Shakespeare (Harper, 1908); Thomas Seccombe and J. W. Allen The Age of Shakespeare, 1579–1631 (Bell, 1903); Wm. Harrison, Description of England, ed. Lothrop Withington (Scott); G. S. Harrison, Platonism in English Poetry (Macmillan); S. Lee, Great Englishmen of the 16th Century.

Sir Thomas More.—Utopia, with other ideal commonwealths (Morley's Universal Library). Utopia and History of Edward V, with Roper's Life of More, in Camelot Series and Temple Classics. Utopia, in Pitt Press Series. For lives of Colet, Erasmus, and More, see The Oxford Reformers, by F. Seebohm (Longmans).

Roger Ascham.—Toxophilus and The Schoolmaster, in Arber's English Reprints, (Macmillan). English Works: Toxophilus; Report of the Affairs and State of Germany; The Schoolmaster; ed. by W. A. Wright (Cambridge English Classics, 1904).

Hugh Latimer.—"Sermon on the Ploughers," in Arber's English Reprints.

Wyatt and Surrey.—Poems, in Tottel's Miscellany, Arber's English Reprints; Poems, Aldine edition; The Surrey and Wyatt Anthology, ed. E. Arber (Frowde). Wyatt's Poems (University of London Press, 1914). Sir Thomas Wyatt and His Poems, by W. E. Simonds (Heath). Essay on Wyatt and Surrey, in J. W. Hale's Folia Litteraria.

Thomas Sackville.—Induction, and Complaint of Buckingham, in Mirror for Magistrates, Library of Old Authors (Scribner); Gorboduc in Specimens of Preshakespearean Drama, edited by J. M. Manly (Ginn). Gorboduc, in Early English Classical Tragedies, ed. by J. W. Cunliffe. Gorboduc, in Minor Elizabethan Drama, ed. by Thorndike (Everyman's Library).

John Lyly.—Euphues, in Arber's English Reprints. Endymion, edited, with essay, by G. P. Baker (Holt); Campaspe, in Manly's Specimens of Preshakespearean Drama (Ginn). Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. W. Bond (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1902). Endymion, in Minor Elizabethan Drama, ed. by Thorndike (Everyman's Library); Life of John Lyly, by J. D. Wilson (Cambridge, 1905).

Sir Philip Sidney. *Texts.*—Arcadia (reproduction of old edition), edited by H. O. Sommers (Kegan Paul); Arcadia, in Early Novelists, ed. by E. A. Baker (New York, E. P. Dutton, 1907); Works, ed. by Albert Feuillerat (Cambridge University Press) in Cambridge English Classics; Defense of Poesy, ed. A. S. Cook (Ginn), also in Pitt Press Series and

Arber's English Reprints; Complete Poems, ed. by A. B. Grosart, London, 1873; Poems, in the Muses' Library (Dutton), Astrophel and Stella, ed. A. Pollard (Stott); Selections, prose, ed. G. MacDonald, in the Elizabethan Library (McClurg); Selections, poetry, ed. A. B. Grosart, in the Elizabethan Library (Stock).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, in vol. IV of A. B. Grosart's edition of the Works of Lord Brooke (Fuller's Worthies Library); Life, by J. A. Symonds (English Men of Letters); Life, by H. R. Fox Bourne (Heroes of the Nations); Some Sonnets of Sir Philip Sidney, in Charles Lamb's Essays of Elia; Life, by Percy Addleshaw (London, 1909); Life, by M. W. Wallace (Cambridge, 1915).

Stephen Gosson.—The School of Abuse, in Arber's English Reprints.

Robert Greene.—Works, ed. A. B. Grosart (Huth Library); Dramatic Works and Poems, ed. A. Dyce (Pickering); Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, ed. A. Ward (Oxford, 1892); Menaphon, ed. E. Arber (London, 1880); Groatsworth of Wit, in Elizabethan and Jacobean Pamphlets, ed. G. E. Saintsbury; Poems of Greene, Marlowe, and Ben Jonson, 1 vol., ed. G. Bell (Bell); Plays and Poems, ed. by J. C. Collins (Oxford, 1905); Plays, ed. by T. H. Dickinson, in the Mermaid Series (Scribner); Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, and James the Fourth, in Minor Elizabethan Drama, ed. by A. H. Thorndike (Everyman's Library).

Thomas Nashe.—Works, ed. A. B. Grosart (Huth Library); The Unfortunate Traveller, edited, with essay on life and writings of Nashe, by E. Gosse (Chiswick Press); Other Papers by Nashe in Saintsbury's Elizabethan and Jacobean Pamphlets; Works, ed. by R. B. McKerrow (London, 1904).

Thomas Lodge.—Works, ed. E. Gosse, for the Hunterian Club (Glasgow, 1883); Sonnets, in Elizabethan Sonnet-Cycles (McClurg); Rosalynde. In Standard English Classics (Ginn & Co., 1910).

George Peele.—Works, ed. A. H. Bullen (Nimmo); Poems and Plays, in Morley's Universal Library; David and Bethsaba, and The Old Wives' Tale, in Minor Elizabethan Drama, ed. by A. H. Thorndike (Everyman's Library).

Richard Hooker. *Texts.*—Works, ed. J. Keble (Oxford University Press, 1836); The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Books 1–4, in Morley's Universal Library.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by Isaak Walton (with lives of Donne, Wotton, and Herbert) in Morley's Universal Library; Essay, by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican (Holt).

Edmund Spenser. *Texts.*—Works, ed. Grosart; Works, Globe edition, with memoir by J. W. Hales (Macmillan); Works, Aldine edition; Complete Poetical Works, Cambridge edition (Houghton Mifflin, 1908); Minor Poems, in Temple Classics (Macmillan); Minor Poems, ed. by Ernest de Sélincourt (Oxford, 1910); Faerie Queene (in Everyman's Library); Faerie Queene, ed. by J. C. Smith (Oxford, 1909); Faerie Queene, bk. I, ed. by M. H. Shackford, Riverside Literature Series,

No. 160 (Houghton Mifflin, 1905); Faerie Queene, bks. I and II, ed. by G. W. Kitchin, Clarendon Press Series (Oxford, 1905); Selections from the Faerie Queene, ed. by John Erskine (Longman's English Classics); Selected Poems, with introduction by R. Noel, in Canterbury Poets Series; Spenser Anthology, ed. E. Arber (Frowde).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by R. W. Church (English Men of Letters); An Outline Guide to the Study of Spenser, by F. I. Carpenter (University of Chicago, 1894); Essay, by J. R. Lowell, in Among my Books, and by E. Dowden, in Transcripts and Studies; Chaucer and Spenser, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets. See also W. S. Landor's Imaginary Conversations Essex and Spenser and Elizabeth and Cecil; Fleay, F. G., Guide to Chaucer and Spenser (1877).

GABRIEL HARVEY.—Works, ed. A. B. Grosart (Huth Library).

GEORGE CHAPMAN. *Texts.*—Poems, Plays, and Translations, ed. R. H. Shepherd, with study of Chapman by A. C. Swinburne (London, 1874); Plays, in Mermaid Series; Translation of Iliad, in Morley's Universal Library; Plays and Poems, ed. T. M. Parrott (New York, 1910); All Fooles, and The Gentleman Usher, ed. T. M. Parrott, in Belles Lettres Series (Boston, 1907); Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, ed. H. F. Schwarz (New York, 1913); Bussy D'Ambois, ed. F. S. Boas, in Belles Lettres Series (Boston, 1905).

Biography and Criticism.—Chapman, a Critical Study, by A. C Swinburne (Chatto and Windus); Essay, by J. R. Lowell, in The Old English Dramatists, and in Conversations on Some of the Old Poets.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.—Idea's Mirror, in Arber's English Garner, Elizabethan Sonnet-Cycles; Daniel's Delia and Drayton's Idea, in King's Classics, ed. A. Esdaile (London, 1908); Critical Study by Oliver Elton (London, 1905).

SAMUEL DANIEL.—Sonnets, in Elizabethan Sonnet-Cycles; Defense of Rhyme, in Ancient Critical Essays, ed. Haslewood; in Elizabethan Essays, ed. G. Smith. Daniel's Delia and Drayton's Idea, in King's Classics, ed. A. Esdaile (London, 1908).

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.—Poems of Greene, Marlowe, and Ben Jonson, ed. R. Bell (Bell). For Marlowe's plays, and critical works upon him, see next division.

THOMAS CAMPION.—Book of Airs, in Arber's English Garner; Poems (Dent); Works, ed. Perceval Vivian (Oxford, 1909); Songs and Masques, ed. A. H. Bullen (London, 1903).

Other collections of Elizabethan Lyrics are: Lyrics from the Dramatists of the Elizabethan Age, ed. A. H. Bullen (Lawrence and Bullen); Poems, chiefly lyrical, from Elizabethan Romances, etc., ed. A. H. Bullen (Nimmo); English Madrigals in the Time of Shakespeare, ed. F. A. Cox (Dent); A Book of Elizabethan Lyrics, ed. F. E. Schelling (Athenæum Press Series); Elizabethan Songs, ed. E. H. Garrett, with introduction by A. Lang (Osgood, McIlvaine); An English Garner (London, 1903); English Lyric Poetry, 1500–1700, ed. F. I. Carpenter (London, 1897); Early Sixteenth Century Lyrics, ed. F. M. Padelford, in Belles Lettres Series (Boston, 1907).

Sir Walter Raleigh. *Texts.*—Works (Oxford University Press); Selections, ed. A. B. Grosart, in the Elizabethan Library (Stock); Poems in Courtly Poets, ed. Hannah, Aldine edition; The Fight of the Revenge, in Arber's English Reprints.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by E. Gosse (English Worthies); Life, by E. Edwards (Macmillan); Essay, by Charles Kingsley, in Plays and Puritans and Other Essays (Macmillan, 1889); Life, by W. Stebbing (Clarendon Press).

Chapter V: The Drama before Shakespeare

Texts.—The principal texts necessary for a study of this period of the drama, up to Marlowe, will be found in Specimens of Preshakespearean Drama, 2 vols., ed. J. M. Manly (Ginn); English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes, by A. W. Pollard, contains some pieces not given in Manly's Specimens, and an interesting essay on the origin of the drama; Everyman, etc., in Everyman's Library. For plays of Lyly, Greene, and Peele, see preceding section. Marlowe's complete works are edited by A. H. Bullen (Nimmo); his chief plays are in the Mermaid Series (Scribner), ed. H. Ellis; Dr. Faustus is edited by W. Wagner (Longmans), and by A. W. Ward; Edward the Second is edited by A. W. Verity (Dent); Marlowe's Works, ed. C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford, 1910); Marlowe's Plays, in Everyman's Library. Minor Elizabethan Drama, ed. A. H. Thorndike, 2 vols. in Everyman's Library; Chief Elizabethan Dramatists, ed. W. A. Neilson (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1911); Representative English Comedy, ed. C. M. Gayley (New York, 1903).

History and Criticism.—A History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne, by A. W. Ward, new edition, 1899; Shakespeare's Predecessors, by J. A. Symonds; Shakespeare and His Predecessors, by F. S. Boas (Scribner); The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy, by J. W. Cunliffe (Macmillan); W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth gives a good general view of the causes leading up to the outburst of poetry in the later years of Elizabeth's reign. Predecessors of Shakespeare, in the Essays and Studies of J. C. Collins; The Tudor Drama, by C. F. T. Brooke (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1911); The Medieval Stage, by E. K. Chambers (Oxford, 1903); The Miracle Play in England, by S. W. Clarke (London, 1894); Plays of our Forefathers, by C. M. Gayley (New York, Duffield, 1907); English Miracle Plays and Moralities, by E. H. Moore (London, 1907); The English Chronicle Play, by Felix E. Schelling (New York, Macmillan, 1902); English Drama, by Felix E. Schelling (New York, Dent, 1914); Growth of the English Drama, by Arnold Wynne (Oxford, 1914). For Marlowe, see essays by E. Dowden, in Transcripts and Studies, and by H. Kingsley, in Fireside Studies, and by J. R. Lowell, in The Old English Dramatists. For the history of the stage, see A Chronicle History of the London Stage, 1559–1642, by F. G. Fleay.

Chapter VI: Shakespeare[1]

Biography and Criticism. Extended Works.—Life of William Shakespeare, by S. Lee (Macmillan); Shakespeare, a critical study of his mind and art, by E. Dowden (Harper); William Shakespeare, a critical study, by G. Brandes (Macmillan); Shakespeare, his life, art, and characters, with an historical sketch of the origin and growth of the drama in England, by H. N. Hudson (Ginn); Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist, by R. G. Moulton (Clarendon Press); A Chronicle History of the Life and Work of Shakespeare, by F. G. Fleay (Nimmo); William Shakspere, a study in Elizabethan Literature, by B. Wendell (Scribner); William Shakespeare, Poet, Dramatist, and Man, by H. W. Mabie (Macmillan); Shakespeare the Man, by Goldwin Smith (Doubleday, Page); The Development of Shakespeare as a Dramatist, by G. P. Baker (New York, 1907); William Shakespeare, his Family and Friends, by C. I. Elton (New York, Dutton, 1904); Life, by F. J. Furnivall (New York, Cassel, 1908); The Man Shakespeare, by Frank Harris (New York, Kennerley, 1911); Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist, by T. R. Lounsbury (New York, Scribner, 1901); Life, by John Masefield, in Home University Library (London, 1911); Shakespeare as a Playwright, by Brander Matthews (New York, Scribner, 1913); Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker, by R. G. Moulton (Macmillan, 1901); The Facts about Shakespeare, by W. A. Neilson and A. H. Thorndike (Macmillan, 1915); Life, by Sir Walter Raleigh (Macmillan, 1907); Life, by W. J. Rolfe (Boston, 1905).

Essays and Studies.—Introduction to Shakespeare, by E. Dowden (Blackie); Shakespeare Primer, by E. Dowden; Shakespearean Primer, by I. Gollancz (Macmillan); Seven Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton, by S. T. Coleridge; Five Lectures on Shakespeare, by B. Ten Brink (Holt); Studies in Shakespeare, by R. G. White (Houghton Mifflin); Notes and Essays on Shakespeare, J. W. Hales; Characters of Shakespeare's Plays, by W. Hazlitt (Bohn's Standard Library); Shakespeare's Female Characters, also entitled Characteristics of Women, by Mrs. Jameson; Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Comic Writers; Shakespeare and Milton, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets; On Shakespeare's tragedies, and their fitness for stage presentation, in Charles Lamb's Essays of Elia; Shakespeare, or the Poet, in R. W. Emerson's Representative Men; Shakespeare Once More, in J. R. Lowell's Among my Books; Shakespeare's Kings, in R. L. Stevenson's Familiar Studies of Men and Books; Shakespeare the Man, in W. Bagehot's Literary Studies; A Study of Shakespeare, A. C. Swinburne; Shakesperean Tragedy, by A. C. Bradley (1904); The Women of Shakespeare, by Frank Harris (London, 1911); Shakespeare and his Forerunners, by Sidney Lanier (New York, Doubleday, Page, 1908); Shakespeare and the Modern Stage, by Sidney Lee (New York,

[1] As available and sufficiently trustworthy editions of Shakespeare are very numerous, no texts are given

Scribner, 1906); A Handbook to the Works of Shakespeare, by M. Luce (1907); Shakespeare's Theatre, by A. H. Thorndike (New York, Macmillan, 1916).

Miscellaneous.—Shakespeare's Versification, by G. H. Browne (Ginn); Shakespeare's London, by J. F. Ordish (Dent); Shakespeare's England, by G. W. Thornbury (Longmans); A Chronicle History of the London Stage, 1559–1642, by F. G. Fleay; Shakespeare's Holinshed, a comparison of the chronicle and the history plays, by W. G. B. Stone (Longmans); The English Chronicle Play, by F. E. Schelling (Macmillan); The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines, by Mary Cowden Clark (Armstrong, 1887); Tales from Shakespeare, by Charles and Mary Lamb (Riverside Library); Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, by W. S. Landor; The Italy of the Elizabethan Dramatists, in Violet Paget's Euphorion; Shakespeare's London, by H. T. Stephenson (1910).

For language, see Abbott's Shakespearean Grammar, and Schmidt's Shakespeare Lexicon (Leipsic).

Chapter VII: Shakespeare's Contemporaries and Successors in the Drama

Texts.—All the texts necessary for the study of this period are included in the Mermaid Series of works of the old dramatists (Scribner). Jonson's Works, ed. H. C. Hart (London, 1906); Jonson's Complete Plays, 2 vols., in Everyman's Library; Ben Jonson's Alchemist, Volpone, Silent Woman, Sad Shepherd, and Poems, are given in Morley's Universal Library. Several of Jonson's Masques, with others, and an essay on the Masque, in H. A. Evans's English Masques; Jonson's Timber, ed. F. E. Schelling (Ginn); Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays, ed. F. E. Schelling, in Masterpieces of the English Drama (New York, 1912); Plays by Webster and Tourneur in Masterpieces of the English Drama (New York, 1912).

Biography and Criticism.—A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559–1642, by F. G. Fleay (Reeves and Turner); Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Comic Writers; Life of Ben Jonson, by J. A. Symonds; A Study of Ben Jonson, by A. C. Swinburne; John Webster, in E. Gosse's Seventeenth Century Studies, and in A. C. Swinburne's Studies in Prose and Poetry; Beaumont and Fletcher, in Swinburne's Studies in Prose and Poetry; John Ford, in Lowell's Conversations on Some of the Old Poets, and in Swinburne's Essays and Studies; Massinger, in A. Symons's Studies in Two Literatures. E. Gosse's Jacobean Poets treats Jonson, Chapman, Beaumont and Fletcher, Heywood, Middleton, Webster, and Massinger. J. R. Lowell's Old English Dramatists treats (besides Marlowe) Webster, Chapman, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, and Ford; English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare, by Creizenach (Lippincott, 1916); Beaumont the Dramatist, by C. M. Gayley (Century, 1904); The Elizabethan Drama, 1558–1642, by F. E. Schelling (Houghton Mifflin, 1908).

Chapter VIII: Seventeenth Century Non-dramatic Literature before the Restoration

General Works.—S. R. Gardiner's History of England, 1603–1660. G. E. Saintsbury's Elizabethan Literature. English Lyric Poetry, 1500–1700, Selections, with essay, by F. I. Carpenter (Scribner); Puritan and Anglican, by Edward Dowden (Holt, 1901); Seventeenth Century Studies, by E. W. Gosse (Dodd, Mead, 1885); The Age of Milton, by J. H. B. Masterman (London, 1911); The Temper of the Seventeenth Century, by Barrett Wendell (Scribner, 1903); Minor Poets of the Caroline Period, ed. by George Saintsbury (Oxford, 1905); A Book of Seventeenth Century Lyrics, ed. by F. E. Schelling (Ginn, 1899).

Francis Bacon. *Texts.*—Works, ed. Ellis, Spedding, and Heath. Essays in Morley's Universal Library; Essays, ed. M. A. Scott (Scribner, 1908); Essays in Everyman's Library; Advancement of Learning, ed. Wright (Clarendon Press Series); both Essays and Advancement of Learning in Macmillan's Library of English Classics; Selections, ed. A. B. Grosart, in The Elizabethan Library (Stock); New Atlantis, ed. A. B. Gough (Oxford, 1915).

Biography and Criticism.—Life and Times of, by J. Spedding (1878); Life, by R. W. Church (English Men of Letters); Life and Philosophy, by J. Nichols; Essay by T. B. Macaulay; Bacon, compared as to style with Sir Thomas Browne and Jeremy Taylor, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.

John Donne. *Texts.*—Poems, in Muses' Library, ed. E. K. Chambers, with introduction by G. E. Saintsbury; Poems, ed. H. J. C. Grierson (Oxford, 1912); Poems, ed. C. E. Norton.

Biography and Criticism.—Life and Letters, by E. Gosse (Dodd, Mead); John Donne, sometime Dean of St. Paul's, by A. Jessopp (Houghton Mifflin); Life, in Walton's Lives, Morley's Universal Library. Essay in E. Dowden's New Studies, and in E. Gosse's Jacobean Poets.

Jeremy Taylor.—Holy Living and Dying, in Bohn's Standard Library. Selections, ed. E. E. Wentworth (Ginn). Life of Jeremy Taylor, with a critical examination of his writings, by R. Heber; Essay by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican; Life, by Edmund Gosse in English Men of Letters. See also W. Hazlitt's Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.

Sir Thomas Browne. *Texts.*—Works, 3 vols., in Bohn's Library; Works, ed. by Charles Sayle (London, 1904); Hydriotaphia (Urn-Burial) and Garden of Cyrus, in Golden Treasury Series; Religio Medici and Urn-Burial, with introduction by J. A. Symonds, in Camelot Series; Religio Medici and other Essays, ed. D. L. Roberts (Stott Library); Religio Medici, Letter to a Friend, and Christian Morals, ed. by W. A. Greenhill, in Golden Treasury Series (Macmillan, 1901); Religio Medici, in Everyman's Library.

Criticism.—Essays, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican; by W. Pater, in Appreciations.

See also W. Hazlitt's Literature of the Age of Elizabeth; Life, by Edmund Gosse, in English Men of Letters.

The Cavalier Poets.—Works of Sir John Suckling, ed. by A. H. Thompson (Dutton, 1910); Poems of Sir Thomas Carew, ed. by Arthur Vincent (Muses' Library, 1899). For selections, see Cavalier and Courtier Lyrists, an anthology of minor seventeenth century verse, in Canterbury Poets Series (Scott); English Lyric Poetry, 1500–1700, Selections, with essay, by F. I. Carpenter (Scribner); A Book of Seventeenth Century Lyrics, ed. by F. E. Schelling (Ginn, 1899); The Cavalier Poets, by Carl Holliday (New York, 1911).

William Browne.—Poetical Works, with introduction by A. H. Bullen, in the Muses' Library. See Gosse's Jacobean Poets.

George Wither.—Poems, ed. by Frank Sidgwick, in the Muses' Library (Dutton, 1902); Poems, with introduction by H. Morley, in Companion Poet Series (Routledge). See also Gosse's Jacobean Poets.

Isaak Walton.—Complete Angler, with introduction by A. Lang (Dent); Complete Angler, in Everyman's Library; Walton's Lives (of Donne, Herbert, etc.), in Morley's Universal Library. Essay by J. R. Lowell, in Latest Literary Essays.

Robert Herrick.—Hesperides and Noble Numbers, ed. A. Pollard, with introduction by A. C. Swinburne, in Muses' Library; Poetical Works, ed. by F. W. Moorman (Oxford, 1915); Hesperides and Noble Numbers, in Everyman's Library; Hesperides, ed. E. Rhys, in Canterbury Poets; Selections, in Golden Treasury Series, and Athenæum Press Series. Essays, by E. Gosse, in Seventeenth Century Studies, and A. C. Swinburne, in Studies in Prose and Poetry; Life, by F. W. Moorman (Lane, 1910).

Giles Fletcher.—Complete Poems, ed. A. B. Grosart, Fuller's Worthies Library; Poetical Works of Giles and Phineas Fletcher, ed. by F. S. Boas, 2 vols. (Cambridge English Classics, 1908). See Gosse's Jacobean Poets.

George Herbert.—Works, in 3 vols., ed. by G. H. Palmer (Houghton Mifflin, 1905); Poetical Works of Herbert and Vaughan, in British Poets, Riverside Edition (Houghton Mifflin); The Temple, in Morley's Universal Library, and in the Temple Classics; Poems, with selections from his prose, and Walton's Life of Herbert, ed. Rhys, in Canterbury Poets Series. Essay, by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican; Life, by J. J. Daniell; George Herbert and His Times, by A. G. Hyde.

Henry Vaughan.—Poetical Works, ed. E. K. Chambers, in Muses' Library; Sacred Poems, ed. H. F. Lyte, in Aldine edition; Works, in 2 vols. (Oxford, 1914). Essays by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican.

Richard Crashaw.—Works, ed. A. B. Grosart, Fuller's Worthies Library; Poems, in the Muses' Library; Poems, Cambridge English Classics (Cambridge, 1904). Essay, by E. Gosse, in Seventeenth Century Studies.

Andrew Marvell.—Poems, ed. G. A. Aitken, Muses' Library; Life, by Augustine Birrell, in English Men of Letters Series. Essays by H.

Rogers, in Essays Biographical and Critical; by A. C. Benson, in his Essays.

Abraham Cowley.—Complete works, with introduction by A. B. Grosart, Chertsey Worthies Library; Poems, in Cambridge English Classics (Cambridge, University Press, 1905); Essays (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1915); Cowley's Essays, ed. Hurd (London, 1868). Essay in Gosse's Seventeenth Century Studies, and in W. Stebbing's Some Verdicts of History Reversed.

John Milton. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, ed. Masson, Globe edition; Poetical Works, with a translation of the Latin poems, ed. Moody, Cambridge edition (Houghton Mifflin); Poetical Works, in Everyman's Library; Poetical Works, ed. by W. Raleigh (1905); Minor Poems, ed. by H. C. Beeching (1903); Paradise Lost, Books I and II, in the Macmillan Pocket Edition of the English Classics (1902); Prose Writings, ed. Morley, Carisbrooke Library; Prose Writings, Bohn's Standard Library; Education, Areopagitica, The Commonwealth, in Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin, 1911); Areopagitica, ed. J. W. Hales (Clarendon Press).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by M. Pattison (English Men of Letters); Life, by W. Raleigh (Putnam); Life, by R. Garnett (Great Writers Series); Life, by Dr. Johnson, in Lives of the Poets; the most available edition is Six Chief Lives from Johnson's Lives of the Poets, ed. M. Arnold (Macmillan); Life and Times, 6 vols., by D. Masson. Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in Among My Books and in Latest Literary Essays; by M. Arnold, in Essays in Criticism; by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican and in Transcripts and Studies; by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies. Addison's Criticism on Paradise Lost, ed. A. S. Cook (Ginn); Studies in Milton, Alden Sampson (Moffat Yard, 1913); Milton's Astronomy, T. N. Orchard (Longmans, 1913); Milton's Prosody, Robert S. Bridges (Oxford, 1901).

John Bunyan. *Texts.*—Grace Abounding, in Cassell's National Library; Pilgrim's Progress, in Golden Treasury Series and Riverside Literature Series and in Everyman's Library; Life and Death of Mr. Badman, and The Holy War, in the Cambridge English Classics (Cambridge, University Press, 1905).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. A. Froude (English Men of Letters). Essays, by T. B. Macaulay; by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican; by J. Tulloch, in English Puritanism and its Leaders.

Chapter IX: The Restoration

General Works.—Macaulay's History of England; The Age of Dryden, by R. Garnett (Bell); Le Publique et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre, 1660–1744, Beljame; From Shakespeare to Pope, by E. Gosse, treats of the rise of the classical school. Eighteenth Century Literature, E. Gosse (Macmillan).

John Dryden. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, ed. W. D. Christie, Globe edition; Poetical Works, Cambridge Edition (Houghton Mifflin); Poems, ed.

by John Sargeaunt (1910); Select Poems, ed. W. D. Christie (Clarendon Press); The Dryden Anthology, ed. E. Arber (Frowde); Essays, selected and edited by W. P. Ker (Clarendon Press); Translation of Æneid, in Morley's Universal Library; Plays, ed. by George Saintsbury, in Mermaid Series; Selected Dramas, ed. by G. R. Noyes (Scott, Foresman, 1915); Selected Essays, ed. by C. D. Yonge (1888); Essay on Dramatic Poesy, ed. by Thomas Arnold (Oxford, 1903).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by G. E. Saintsbury (English Men of Letters); Life, by Dr. Johnson (for edition see under Milton). Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in Among My Books; by J. C. Collins, in Essays and Studies; by D. Masson, in The Three Devils and Other Essays; by W. Hazlitt, in Lectures on the English Poets.

Samuel Butler.—Poetical Works, in British Poets, Riverside Edition (Houghton Mifflin); Hudibras, in Morley's Universal Library; Hudibras, ed. by A. R. Waller, in Cambridge English Classics. Characters and Passages from the Note Books, ed. by A. R. Waller, in Cambridge English Classics (1908). Essay, by E. Dowden, in Puritan and Anglican.

Samuel Pepys.—Diary, with selections from his correspondence, ed. Lord Braybrooke, in Chandos Library (Warne); Diary, 2 vols., in Everyman's Library; Diary, ed. Mynors Bright (Bickers). Samuel Pepys and the World he Lived in, by H. B. Wheatley (Scribner); Essay, by R. L. Stevenson, in Familiar Studies of Men and Books (Scribner).

Thomas Otway.—Plays, ed. R. Noel (Mermaid Series); The Orphan, and Venice Preserved, in Belles Lettres Series (Heath).

William Wycherley.—Plays, ed. W. C. Ward (Mermaid Series). See Wycherley, Congreve, etc., in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Comic Writers.

William Congreve.—Plays, ed. A. C. Ewald (Mermaid Series). Life, by E. Gosse (Great Writers); Congreve, in W. M. Thackeray's English Humorists. See also under Wycherley. For Wycherley, Congreve, and the Restoration comedy, see C. Lamb's essay On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century, and G. Meredith's Essay on Comedy and the Comic Spirit (Scribner); Plays of the above dramatists are to be found in Representative English Dramas from Dryden to Sheridan, ed. by Frederick Tupper and James W. Tupper (Oxford, 1914).

Chapter X: The Eighteenth Century: The Reign of Classicism

General Works.—History of England in the Eighteenth Century, by W. E. H. Lecky; English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, by L. Stephen; History of English Literature in the Eighteenth Century, by T. S. Perry; Eighteenth Century Literature, by E. Gosse; The Age of Pope, by J. Dennis; The Age of Johnson, by T. Seccombe (Macmillan); Le Publique et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre, 1660–1744. For the early history of Journalism, see H. R. Fox Bourne's English Newspapers, chaps. 1–5 (Chatto and Windus, 1887). Some Eighteenth Century Men of Letters, by Whitewell Elwin (London, Murray,

1902); English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century, by Sir Leslie Stephen (London, 1904).

JONATHAN SWIFT. *Texts.*—Works, ed. T. Scott (Bell); Selections, ed. C. T. Winchester (Ginn); Selections, ed. H. Craik (Clarendon Press); Selections, in Carisbrooke Library; Journal to Stella, ed. G. A. Aitken (Putnam); Selected Letters, in Eighteenth Century Letters and Letter-Writers, ed. R. B. Johnson; Gulliver's Travels, in Everyman's Library; Tale of a Tub, and The Battle of Books, in Everyman's Library; Selections, ed. Prescott (Holt, 1901).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. C. Collins (Chatto and Windus); Life, by H. Craik (Murray); Life, by L. Stephen (English Men of Letters); Life, by Dr. Johnson (for edition see under Milton). Essays, by W. M. Thackeray, in English Humorists; by A. Dobson, in Eighteenth Century Vignettes; by W. E. H. Lecky in Leaders of Public Opinion.

JOSEPH ADDISON. *Texts.*—Works, ed. H. G. Bohn (Bohn's British Classics); Selections in Athenæum Press Series, Golden Treasury Series, Camelot Series, Chandos Classics, etc.; Selections, ed. E. B. Reed (Holt, 1906).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. J. Courthope (English Men of Letters); Life, by Dr. Johnson (for edition see under Milton). Essays, by T. B. Macaulay (numerous school editions); by E. Gosse, in Among My Books; by W. M. Thackeray, in English Humorists.

SIR RICHARD STEELE. *Texts.*—Selected Essays from the Tatler and Guardian, together with Macaulay's lives of Steele and Addison (Bangs); Selections, ed. G. R. Carpenter (Athenæum Press Series); The Lover, and other papers by Steele and Addison, in Camelot Series; Steele's Plays, ed. G. A. Aitken (Mermaid Series).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by G. A. Aitken (London, 1889); Life, by A. Dobson (English Worthies). See Thackeray's English Humorists, and "Steele's Letters," in A. Dobson's Eighteenth Century Vignettes.

LORD CHESTERFIELD.—Letters to his Son, ed. C. Strachey (Putnam), also in Camelot Series, and in Eighteenth Century Letters, vol. II, ed. R. B. Johnson (New York, 1898); Life, by W. H. Craig (Lane, 1907). Essay, by J. C. Collins, in Essays and Studies, and by Sainte-Beuve in English Portraits (Holt).

ALEXANDER POPE. *Texts.*—Works by W. Elwin and W. J. Courthope; Poetical Works, ed. A. W. Ward, Globe edition; Rape of the Lock, and Essay on Man, in Eclectic English Classics (American Book Co., 1898); Rape of the Lock, in Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin, 1901); Essay on Man, ed. M. Pattison (Clarendon Press); Satires and Epistles, ed. M. Pattison (Clarendon Press); Pope's Iliad, books 1, 6, 22–24 (numerous school editions); Selections from Poetical Works, in Canterbury Poets Series; Letters, in English Letters and Letter-Writers of the Eighteenth Century, ed. H. Williams (Bell).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by L. Stephen (English Men of Letters); Life, by Dr. Johnson (for edition see under Milton). Essays, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by Sainte-Beuve, in English

Portraits; by J. R. Lowell, in My Study Windows; by T. De Quincey, in Biographical Essays, and also in his Essays on the Poets; by W. S. Lilly, in Essays and Speeches. See also W. M. Thackeray's English Humorists; W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the Poets; and J. Warton's Genius and Writings of Pope; Mr. Pope, His Life and Times, by E. M. Symonds (London, 1909).

CHAPTER XI: THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY NOVEL. (SEE P. 495)

CHAPTER XII: THE REVIVAL OF ROMANTICISM

General Works.—English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century, by H. A. Beers; The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement, by W. L. Phelps; English Literature in the Eighteenth Century, by T. S. Perry; Eighteenth Century Literature, by E. Gosse; Literary History of England, by Mrs. Oliphant (opening chapters); Two lectures on Romance, by Sir Walter Raleigh (Princeton, 1916); The Peace of the Augustans, a Survey of Eighteenth Century Literature, by George Saintsbury (London, 1916); The Romantic Movement in English Poetry, by Arthur Symons (Dutton, 1909); Some Paradoxes of the English Romantic Movement, by W. D. MacClintock (Chicago, 1903); The Mid-Eighteenth Century, by J. H. Millar, in Periods of English Literature Series (Scribner, 1902).

JAMES THOMSON. *Texts.*—The Seasons and Castle of Indolence, ed. H. E. Greene (Athenæum Press Series); Works, Aldine edition.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. Bayne (Scribner); "Thomson and Cowper," in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets.

WILLIAM COLLINS.—Works, Aldine edition. Essay in Swinburne's Miscellanies.

EDWARD YOUNG.—Works, Aldine edition. Essay by George Eliot, "Worldliness and Other Worldliness."

THOMAS GRAY. *Texts.*—Works in Verse and Prose, ed. E. Gosse (Macmillan); Poems, in Routledge's Pocket Library; Poems of Gray, Beattie, and Collins, in Chandos Classics (Warne); Poems, in the Belles Lettres Series (1914); Correspondence of Gray, Walpole, West, and Ashton (Oxford, 1915); Selections from Gray, ed. W. L. Phelps (Athenæum Press).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by E. Gosse (English Men of Letters); Life, by Dr. Johnson (for edition see under Johnson). Essays, by M. Arnold, in Essays in Criticism; by J. R. Lowell, in Latest Literary Essays; by A. Dobson, in Eighteenth Century Vignettes; by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library. See also The Influence of Old Norse Literature upon English Literature, by C. H. Nordby (Macmillan).

THOMAS PERCY.—Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, in Chandos Classics (Warne); in Bohn's Standard Library; in Everyman's Library. Percy: Prelate and Poet, by Alice C. C. Gaussin (London, 1908). More recent ballad collections, taken from Percy and other sources, are: The Ballad Book, ed. W. Allingham; Old English Ballads, edited with valuable preface, by F. B. Gummere (Athenæum Press Series).

See, besides general works above, "The Revival of Ballad Poetry in the Eighteenth Century," in J. W. Hales's Folia Litteraria.

James Macpherson.—Ossian, in Canterbury Poets. See Beers's English Romanticism, etc. Life, by J. S. Smart (London, 1905).

Thomas Chatterton.—Poetical Works, ed. by H. D. Roberts (1906); Poetical Works, ed. by Sir Sidney Lee (1909); Poetical Works, in Canterbury Poets. Life, by Sir D. Wilson (Macmillan). Life, by Charles Edward Russell (New York, 1908). Essay, by D. Masson, in Essays Biographical and Critical.

Samuel Johnson. *Texts.*—Essays, selected and edited by G. B. Hill (Dent); Essays, selected, in Camelot Series; Rasselas, ed. G. B. Hill (Clarendon Press); Rasselas, ed. H. Morley, in Morley's Universal Library; Letters, ed. G. B. Hill (Clarendon Press); Letters, selected, in Eighteenth Century Letters, ed. R. B. Johnson (New York, 1898); Lives of the English Poets, in Oxford English Classics (Oxford, 1905); Six Chief Lives from Johnson's Lives of the Poets, with Macaulay's Life of Johnson, ed. M. Arnold (Macmillan).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by L. Stephen (English Men of Letters); Boswell's Life of Johnson, ed. G. B. Hill (Macmillan); Boswell's Life of Johnson, in Everyman's Library, 4 vols. Dr. Johnson, his Friends and Critics, by G. B. Hill (Smith Elder); Essay, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library, and by T. B. Macaulay; Dr. Johnson and His Circle, by J. C. Bailey, in Home University Library (Holt); Six Essays on Johnson, by Sir Walter Raleigh (Oxford, 1910).

Oliver Goldsmith. *Texts.*—Poems, Plays, and Essays, ed. J. Aikin and H. T. Tuckerman (Crowell); Works, ed. by J. W. M. Gibbs, in Bohn's Standard Library; Miscellaneous Works, ed. D. Masson, Globe edition; Vicar of Wakefield, Poems, and Plays, in Morley's Universal Library; The Goldsmith Anthology, ed. E. Arber (Frowde); Plays, in Temple Classics (London, 1911); Selected Essays, in English Literature for School Series (Cambridge, 1910); Vicar of Wakefield, in Everyman's Library.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. Black (English Men of Letters); Life, by A. Dobson (Great Writers); Life, by J. Forster. Essays, by A. Dobson, in his Miscellanies, by T. De Quincey, in Essays on the Poets; by T. B. Macaulay. See also Thackeray's English Humorists.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan.—Plays, ed. R. Dircks, in Camelot Series; Plays, in Morley's Universal Library, and in Macmillan's Library of English Classics; Plays, in Everyman's Library; The Rivals, in Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin, 1910); The School for Scandal, in the Temple Dramatists (London, 1911). Life, by L. C. Sanders (Great Writers), and by M. O. W. Oliphant (English Men of Letters).

Edward Gibbon. *Texts.*—Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, ed. J. B. Bury (Methuen); Student's Gibbon, abridged (Murray); Memoirs, with essay by W. D. Howells (Osgood); Memoirs, ed. G. B. Hill (Methuen); Memoirs, in Carisbrooke Library and in Athenæum Press Series.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. C. Morison (English Men of Letters). Essays, by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies; by F. Harrison, in Ruskin, Mill and other literary estimates; by C. A. Sainte-Beuve, in English Portraits.

EDMUND BURKE. *Texts.*—Select Works, ed. E. J. Payne (Clarendon Press Series); Selections, ed. B. Perry (Holt); American Speeches and Letters on the Irish Question, in Morley's Universal Library. Essay on the Sublime and the Beautiful, Temple Classics (Macmillan); Orations and Essays, in World's Great Books Series (Appleton, 1900); Speeches and Letters, in Everyman's Library; Speeches on America, in Temple Classics (London, 1906).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. Morley (English Men of Letters). See E. Dowden's French Revolution and English Literature. Political Philosophy of Burke, by John MacCunn (London, 1913).

GEORGE CRABBE. *Texts.*—Life and Poetical Works, ed. by his son (London, 1901); Poems, in Cambridge English Classics (Cambridge, 1907); Selections, ed. by A. Deane (1903); Selected Poems, in Cassell's National Library, and in Canterbury Poets; The Borough, in Macmillan's Temple Classics.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by Alfred Ainger, in English Men of Letters Series; George Crabbe and His Times, by René Huchon, tr. from the French (London, Murray, 1907). Life, by T. E. Kebbel (Great Writers). Essays, by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860.

WILLIAM COWPER. *Texts.*—Complete Poetical Works, ed. by H. S. Milford (1905); Poems, ed. by J. C. Bailey (1905); Poetical Works, in Globe edition, in Aldine edition; Selected Poems, in Athenæum Press Series, and in Canterbury Poets; Letters, ed. Thomas Wright (1904); Letters, ed. by J. G. Frazer (1912); Selections from Cowper's letters, ed. by E. V. Lucas (1911).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by Goldwin Smith (English Men of Letters); Life, by R. Southey. Essays, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies; by C. A. Sainte-Beuve, in English Portraits; by A. Dobson, in Eighteenth Century Vignettes; Bunyan, Cowper, and Channing, in G. E. Woodberry's Makers of Literature.

WILLIAM BLAKE. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, ed. by James Sampson (Oxford, 1905); Poetical Works (London, Chatto & Windus, 1906); Poems, with memoir by W. M. Rossetti, Aldine edition; Poems, with specimens of prose writings, in Canterbury Poets; Complete Works, with elaborate critical apparatus and illustrations from Blake's Prophetical Books, ed. E. J. Ellis and W. B. Yeats (London, 1893); Selections, ed. by F. E. Pierce (Yale University Press, 1915); Marriage of Heaven and Hell, and a Song of Liberty (London, 1911); Letters, with Life, by Frederick Tatham (London, 1906).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by G. K. Chesterton (Dutton, 1910); Life, by Basil de Sélincourt (Scribner, 1909); Life, by Irene Langridge

(London, Bell, 1904); Life, by J. E. Ellis (London, Chatto & Windus, 1907); Life, by Arthur Symons (Dutton, 1907); Life, by A. Gilchrist (Macmillan); Life, by A. T. Story (London, 1893); William Blake, a Critical Study, by A. C. Swinburne (Chatto & Windus). Essay, by A. C. Benson, in his Essays; Essay, in Studies in Poetry, by A. S. Brooke (Putnam, 1907).

Robert Burns. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, with introduction by W. E. Henley (Houghton Mifflin); also in Aldine edition, in Clarendon Press Series, and in Canterbury Poets; Representative Poems, ed. by C. L. Hanson, in Standard English Classics (Ginn, 1902); Letters, selected, in Camelot Series.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. E. Henley (see Cambridge edition, above; also published separately); Life, by J. C. Shairp (English Men of Letters); Life, by G. Setoun (Scribner); Life, by T. F. Henderson, in Oxford Biographies (Oxford, 1904). Essays, by T. Carlyle (a convenient edition is included in Longman's English Classics); by R. L. Stevenson, in Familiar Studies of Men and Books; by W. H. Thorne, in Modern Idols; by Stopford Brooke, in Theology in the English Poets; by J. Forster, in Great Teachers. Burns and the Old English Ballads, in W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets; Robert Burns, How to Know Him, W. A. Nielson (Bobbs-Merrill).

Chapter XIII: The Triumph of Romanticism

General Works.—English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century, by H. A. Beers; Nineteenth Century Literature, by G. E. Saintsbury; The French Revolution and English Literature, by E. Dowden; Studies in Literature, 1789–1877, by E. Dowden; Literary History of England, by Mrs. Oliphant; Studies in Poetry, by A. S. Brooke (Putnam, 1907); English Poets and the National Ideal, by Ernest de Sélincourt (Oxford University Press, 1915); The French Revolution and the English Poets, by A. E. Hancock (Holt, 1899); The Romantic Movement in English Poetry, by Arthur Symons (Dutton, 1909); Survey of English Literature, 1780–1830, by Oliver Elton (London, 1912); The Age of Wordsworth, by C. H Herford (London, Bell, 1897); The Romantic Triumph, by T S. Omond (London, Blackwoods, 1909); The Romantic Revolt, by C. E. Vaughan (Scribner, 1907); A Group of English Essayists of the Early Nineteenth Century, by C. T. Winchester (Macmillan, 1910); Victorian Poets, by E. C Stedman.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge. *Texts.*—Complete Poetical Works, ed. by E. H. Coleridge (Oxford, 1912); Poetical Works, ed R. Garnett, in Muses' Library; Poetical Works, ed. J. D Campbell (Macmillan); also in Aldine edition, Athenæum Press Series, and Canterbury Poets; Selections from prose writings, ed. C. M. Gayley (Ginn); ed. H. A. Beers (Holt); Lectures on Shakespeare and other English Poets (Bohn's Standard Library); Biographia Literaria, in Everyman's Library; Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare, in Everyman's Library; Literary Criticism (Oxford, 1908); Selections, ed. by Arthur Symons (1905); Selections, ed. by Edward Dowden (1907).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by H. D. Traill (English Men of Letters). Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in Democracy and Other Addresses; by E. Dowden, in New Studies in Literature; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860; by W. Hazlitt, in The Spirit of the Age; by W. Pater, in Appreciations; by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by Stopford Brooke, in Theology in the English Poets; by A. C. Swinburne, in Essays and Studies; by J. Forster, in Great Teachers. See also "My First Acquaintance with Poets," by W. Hazlitt, and notices of Coleridge in the writings of De Quincey.

William Wordsworth. *Texts.*—Poetical Works and Life, ed. Knight (1889); Poetical Works, with introduction by J. Morley, Globe edition; Aldine Edition; Selections, with essay by M. Arnold, in Golden Treasury Series; Selections, ed. E. Dowden (Ginn); Longer Poems, in Everyman's Library; Shorter Poems, in Everyman's Library; Literary Criticism, with an introduction by N. C. Smith (1905). Selections from prose writings, ed. C. M. Gayley (Ginn); Prefaces and Essays on Poetry, ed. A. J. George (Heath); Wordsworth's Prose, ed. Grosart (London, 1876).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, in 2 vols., by G. M. Harper (Scribner, 1916); Life, Letters, and Journals, in 2 vols., by G. Ticknor (New York, 1909); Life, by Sir Walter Raleigh (London, Arnold, 1903); Wordsworth and the English Lake Country, by E. S. Robertson (Appleton, 1911); Introduction to Life and Works, by C. Punch (1907); Wordsworth and his Circle, by D. Rannie (1907); Wordsworth, Poet of Nature, and Poet of Man, by E. H. Sneath (New York, 1912); Life, by F. W. H Myers (English Men of Letters), Early Life a study of the Prelude, by E. Legouis, translated by J. M. Matthews (Dent). A Primer of Wordsworth, by L. Magnus (Methuen); Helps to the Study of Arnold's Wordsworth, by R Wilson (Macmillan) Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in Among My Books, and in Democracy and Other Addresses; by W. Pater, in Appreciations; by R. H. Hutton, in Literary Essays, and in Essays Theological and Literary; by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning, by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies; by R. W. Church, in Dante and Other Essays; by W. Hazlitt, in The Spirit of the Age.

Robert Southey. *Texts.*—Poetical Works (Crowell); Selections, in Canterbury Poets, and Golden Treasury Series; Life of Nelson, in Morley's Universal Library, in Temple Classics (Dent), and in English Classics (Longmans); Poems, ed. by M. H. Fitzgerald (Oxford, 1909).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by E Dowden (English Men of Letters). Essay, by G E Saintsbury, in Studies in English Literature, 1780–1860, 2d series; by W Hazlitt, in The Spirit of the Age.

Thomas Campbell.—Poetical Works, Aldine edition. Life, by J. C. Hadden (Scribner) Essay, by G. E Saintsbury, in Studies in English Literature, 1780–1860, 2d series.

George Gordon, Lord Byron. *Texts.*—Complete Poetical Works (Macmillan, 1907); Poems and Plays, 3 vols., in Everyman's Library; Poetical Works, ed. by E. H. Coleridge (1905); Letters and Journals,

ed. T. Moore (Murray); Selections, with essay by M. Arnold, in Golden Treasury Series; Selections, ed. F. I. Carpenter (Holt); Letters, in Camelot Series.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. Nichol (English Men of Letters); Life, by R. Noel (Great Writers). Essays, by M. Arnold, in Essays in Criticism (same as that prefixed to Selections, above); by W. Hazlitt, in The Spirit of the Age; by T. B. Macaulay, in his Essays. Essay, by George Brandes, in Main Currents of Nineteenth Century Literature, vol. 4.

Percy Bysshe Shelley. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, ed. E. Dowden, Globe edition; Poetical Works, ed. G. E. Woodberry, Cambridge edition; Poetical Works, in Everyman's Library; Poems, ed. by C. D. Locock (London, Methuen, 1911); The Cenci, ed. by G. E. Woodberry, in the Belles Lettres Series (Heath, 1909); Selections, in Golden Treasury Series and in Heath's English Classics; Essays and Letters, in Camelot Series. Letters, ed. by Roger Ingpen (Putnam, 1909).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. Sharp (Great Writers); Life, by J. A. Symonds (English Men of Letters); Life, by E. Dowden (Kegan Paul). A Shelley Primer, by H. S. Salt (London, 1887). Essays, by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies; by M. Arnold, in Essays in Criticism; by R. H. Hutton, in Literary Essays, and in Essays Theological and Literary; by J. Forster, in Great Teachers; Shelley, Godwin, and their Circle, by H. N. Brailsford, in the Home University Library (Holt, 1913); Essay, by Francis Thompson (London, 1900); Essay, by George Brandes, in Main Currents of Nineteenth Century Literature, vol. 4; Shelley, the Man and the Poet, by B. A. Clutton (1910).

Thomas Moore.—Poetical Works, in Chandos Classics (Warne), and in Canterbury Poets. Life and Works, by A. J. Symington (Harper); Selected Poems, ed. by C. L. Falkiner, in the Golden Treasury Series (1905); Life, by S. L. Gwynn, in English Men of Letters Series; Essay, by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860.

Leigh Hunt. *Texts.*—Essays, with introduction by A. Symons, in Camelot Series; Dramatic Essays, selected and edited by W. Archer and R. W. Lowe (Scott); Selections from prose and verse, Cavendish Library (Warne); Stories from the Italian Poets, Knickerbocker Nuggets Series (Putnam). Selections in Prose and Verse, ed. by J. H. Lobban, in Cambridge Literature for Schools Series (Cambridge, University Press, 1909).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by W. C. Monkhouse (Great Writers). Essays, by T. B Macaulay; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860; in W. Hazlitt's Spirit of the Age.

John Keats. *Texts.*—Poetical Works, with letters, ed. H. E. Scudder, Cambridge edition; Poetical Works, with life by Lord Houghton, Aldine edition; Poems, in Everyman's Library; Poetical Works, ed. by W. T. Arnold, Globe edition (Macmillan, 1907); Poems, in 2 vols., ed. by Sir Sidney Colvin (1915), Selected poems, ed. by Arthur Symons (1907); Poems (not quite complete), ed. Palgrave, in Golden Treasury

Series; Poems, ed. A. Bates (Athenæum Press Series); Letters, ed. H. B. Forman.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by S. Colvin (English Men of Letters); Life, by W. M. Rossetti (Great Writers); Life, by A. E. Hancock. Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in Among My Books; by M. Arnold, in Essays in Criticism; by A. C. Swinburne, in Miscellanies; by W. H. Hudson, in Studies in Interpretation; by D. Masson, in Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Other Essays.

CHARLES LAMB. *Texts.*—Poems, Plays, and Miscellaneous Essays, ed. A. Ainger (Macmillan); Essays of Elia, in Everyman's Library; Tales from Shakespeare, in Everyman's Library; Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1908); Essays of Elia, in Camelot Classics; Dramatic Essays, with introduction by Brander Matthews (Dodd, Mead); Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, in Bohn's Antiquarian Library; Tales from Shakespeare, Riverside Library (Houghton Mifflin).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by E. V. Lucas, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1908); Sidelights on Charles Lamb, by Bertram Dobell (Scribner, 1903); Life, by A. Ainger (English Men of Letters). Mary and Charles Lamb, by W. C. Hazlitt (1874); Essays, by T. De Quincey, in Biographical Essays; by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by W. Pater, in Appreciations; "Lamb and Wither," in A. C. Swinburne's Miscellanies; "Lamb and Keats," in F. Harrison's Ruskin, Mill, and other Literary Estimates.

WILLIAM HAZLITT. *Texts.*—Works, ed. W. E. Henley (Dent, 1902–4). Essays, selected, in Camelot Series; Dramatic Essays, selected and edited by W. Archer and R. W. Lowe (Scott); Lectures on the English Comic Writers, in Temple Classics (Dent); Characters of Shakespeare's Plays, in Bohn's Standard Library; Selections from complete works, with introduction by A. Ireland, in Cavendish Library (Warne); Selected Essays, ed. by Jacob Zeitlin (Oxford, 1913); Table Talk, in Everyman's Library.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by A. Birrell (English Men of Letters). Essays, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860; by T. De Quincey, in Essays on the Poets and Other English Writers.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY. *Texts.*—Complete Works, ed. D. Masson (Edinburgh, 1889); Confessions of an English Opium Eater, in Temple Classics (Dent), and in Everyman's Library; Joan of Arc and English Mail Coach, ed. J. M. Hart (Holt); Revolt of a Tartar Tribe, ed. C. E. Baldwin (Longmans); Joan of Arc, and the English Mail Coach, in the Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin, 1906); Reminiscences of the English Lake Poets, in Everyman's Library; Selections from De Quincey, ed. M. H. Turk (Ginn, 1902); Selections, ed. Bliss Perry (Doubleday & Page).

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by D. Masson (English Men of Letters); Life, by A. H. Japp (London, 1879); Life, by H. S. Salt (1904). Essays, by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature,

1780–1860, 1st series; by D. Masson, in Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and other Essays; by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. *Texts.*—Complete Works, ed. C. G. Crump (London, 1891); Selections in Golden Treasury series, ed. Colvin. Imaginary Conversations, selected by H. Ellis, in Camelot Series; Pericles and Aspasia, ed. H. Ellis, in Camelot Series; Select Poems in Canterbury Poets.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by S. Colvin (English Men of Letters). Essays, by E. Dowden, in Studies in Literature, 1789–1877; by G. E. Woodberry, in Makers of Literature; by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Studies in English Literature, 1780–1860, 2d series; by A. C. Swinburne, in Miscellanies.

THOMAS HOOD. *Texts.*—Complete Poetical Works, ed. by W. Jerrold (Oxford, 1906); Choice Works, in prose and verse (Chatto, Windus); Selected Poems, with selected poems of Leigh Hunt, in Canterbury Poets.

Criticism.—Essay, by G. E. Saintsbury, in Essays in English Literature, 1780–1860, 2d series; "Hood and Mrs. Browning," in W. J. Dawson's Makers of Modern English; Life, by Walter Jerrold (London, 1909).

CHAPTER XIV: THE VICTORIAN ERA

General Works.—A History of Our Own Times, by J. M'Carthy; Nineteenth Century Literature, by G. E. Saintsbury; Victorian Poets, by E. C. Stedman; An Anthology of Victorian Poetry, by E. C. Stedman; A Literary History of England in the Nineteenth Century, by Mrs. Oliphant; English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century, by H. A. Beers. "Victorian Literature," in E. Dowden's Transcripts and Studies; The Victorian Age in Literature, by G. K. Chesterton, in Home University Library (Holt, 1913); Studies in Early Victorian Literature, by Frederic Harrison (London, 1906); Interpretation of Literature, by Lafcadio Hearn, 2 vols. (Dodd, Mead, 1915); Papers, Critical and Reminiscent, by William Sharp (Duffield, 1912); The Age of Tennyson, by Hugh Walker (London, 1908); The Literature of the Victorian Era, by Hugh Walker (London, 1910); Outlines of Victorian Literature, by Hugh Walker (Cambridge, 1913); British Poets of the Nineteenth Century, ed. by C. H. Page (Boston, 1904); The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse, ed. by Sir A. Quiller-Couch (Oxford, 1912).

THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY. *Texts.*—Essays and Lays of Ancient Rome, 27 essays in one volume (Longmans, 1896); Essays on Addison and Milton, in Longman's English Classics; Essay on Johnson, in Longman's English Classics; Miscellaneous Essays, and the Lays of Ancient Rome, in Everyman's Library; Critical and Historical Essays in Everyman's Library; Selections from the History of England, ed. by J. W. Bartram, in Longman's English Classics.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. A. C. Morison (English Men of Letters); Life, by G. O. Trevelyan. Essays, by L. Stephen, in Hours in a Library; by W. Bagehot, in Literary Studies; by F. Harri-

son, in Studies in Early Victorian Literature; by G. E. Saintsbury, in Corrected Impressions.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.—Works (Longmans); Apologia Pro Vita Sua, in Everyman's Library; University Subjects, in Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin); Selections, with introductory essay, by L. E. Gates (Holt).

Biography and Criticism.—Cardinal Newman, by R. H. Hutton (Houghton Mifflin); Cardinal Newman, the Story of his Life, by J. H. Jennings; The Oxford Movement, 1833–1845, by R. W. Church (London, 1891). Essays, by R. H. Hutton, in Modern Guides of English Thought; by R. W. Church, in Occasional Papers, vol. II (six papers on Newman); by A. B. Donaldson, in Five Great Oxford Leaders (London, 1900); by L. E. Gates (Newman as a prose writer), in Three Studies in Literature (also prefixed to selections, above); by W. S. Lilly, in Essays and Speeches; by J. Jacobs, in Literary Studies.

THOMAS CARLYLE. *Texts.*—Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, 1 vol. (Appleton, 1874); French Revolution, 3 vols. (Scribner, 1896); Life of Sterling (Scribner, 1897); Sartor Resartus, and Heroes, in Athenæum Press Series; Past and Present, Chartism, and Sartor Resartus, 1 vol. (Harper); Essay on Burns, in Longman's English Classics, and various other school editions; Sartor Resartus, and Heroes and Hero Worship, in Everyman's Library; Past and Present, in Handy Volume Classics (New York, Crowell, 1903); Selections from Sartor Resartus, The French Revolution, and Past and Present, ed. by S. B. Hemingway (Heath, 1915); History of Frederick the Great, abridged edition, ed. by E. Sanderson.

Biography and Criticism.—Life, by J. A. Froude (Scribner); Reminiscences, ed. Froude (Scribner); Reminiscences, ed. C. E. Norton; Life, by R. Garnett (Great Writers); Life, by J. Nichol (English Men of Letters); Life, by A. S. Arnold (1903); Life, by B. W. Matz (1902); Life, by P. Warner (1904). Essays, by J. R. Lowell, in My Study Windows; by R. H. Hutton, in Modern Guides of English Thought; by F. Harrison, in Studies in Early Victorian Literature; by J. M. Robertson, in Modern Humanists; by W. C. Brownell, in Victorian Prose Masters; by W. S. Lilly, in Four English Humorists of the Nineteenth Century; "Dr. Johnson and Carlyle," in J. Burroughs's Indoor Studies.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON. *Texts.*—Works, Globe edition; Works, Cambridge edition; Poems, in Everyman's Library; Select Poems, in Belles Lettres Series (Heath, 1908); Select Poems, ed. W. J. Rolfe (Houghton, Mifflin); numerous school editions of The Princess, In Memoriam, etc.

Biography and Criticism.—Life and Letters, by Hallam Tennyson (Macmillan); Life, by R. F. Horton (Dent); Life, by A. Waugh (U. S. Book Co.); Life, by A. C. Benson (London, Methuen, 1904); Life, by Andrew Lang (London, Blackwood, 1901); Life, by T. R. Lounsbury (New Haven, 1915); Life, by Sir A. C. Lyall, in English Men of Letters Series; Tennyson and his Friends, by Hallam Tennyson (Macmillan, 1911). The Poetry of Tennyson, by Henry van Dyke (Scribner);

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